Encounter

LESLIE A. FIEDLER

The Un-Angry Young Men

America's Post-War Generation

DENIS DE ROUGEMONT

Man v. Technics?

ABIOSEH NICOL

The Truly Married Woman

A Story

PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE

A V.I.P. in Morocco

COLIN WELCH

"Dear Little Noddy"

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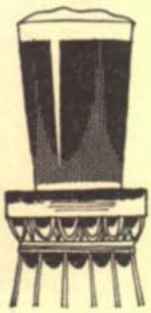

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The Un-Angry Young Men	3	LESLIE A. FIEDLER
A V.I.P. in Morocco	13	PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE
"Dear Little Noddy"	18	COLIN WELCH
Not by Rice Alone . . .	23	ROBERT GUILLAIN
The Truly Married Woman (story)	31	ABIOSEH NICOL
Poetry	37	BURNS SINGER VINCENT BUCKLEY DIANA WITHERBY MICHAEL HAMBURGER W. S. GRAHAM
Man v. Technics?	43	DENIS DE ROUGEMONT
Art by the Square Yard	53	ANTHONY RHODES
Notes from a Diary	56	STEPHEN SPENDER
The Inspiration of Antique Painting	59	ROBIN IRONSIDE
		DISCUSSION
Portrait of the "Artist" as an Angry Young Gentleman	66	RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL
		LETTERS
J. B. PRIESTLEY	69	G. B. KEENE
I. YASS		KENNETH STERN
ROBIN SANBORN		MELVIN J. LASKY
H. G. WILLIAMS		
		BOOKS
Innocence and Politics	71	RICHARD WOLLHEIM
An Act of Resignation		STUART HAMPSHIRE
American Ambiguities		IRVING KRISTOL
Stop Press!		ANGUS MAUDE
The European Question		C. M. WOODHOUSE
Three Poets		GRAHAM HOUGH
And Yet . . .		CONSTANTINE FITZ GIBBON
Novels		JOHN MORTIMER
Body and Soul		BRIAN INGLIS
West End, East End		DAVID WRIGHT

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Leslie A. Fiedler

The Un-Angry Young Men

America's Post-War Generation

"BE CAREFUL what you wish for in your youth," says an aphorism of Goethe's by which I have long been haunted, "for you will get it in your middle-age." It is a terrifying thought, but at forty I feel capable of amending it into one still more terrifying: "Be careful what you wish for in your youth," my new version runs, "for *the young* will get it in your middle-age." Since what I wished for when I was young was maturity and an end to innocence, in short, middle-age itself, I thought I was playing it safe; and, anyhow, I always added under my breath, like Augustine praying to be delivered from the lusts of the flesh: "Not yet, dear God, not *yet*!" First violence and despair, the flirtation with failure and the commitment to radical politics; then all the savour of slow disenchantment; and only at long last the acceptance of responsibility and accommodation—this was the pattern I imagined and approximately lived, the pattern of many of us to whom the Great Depression seemed perversely enough our Great Good Time; and the Spanish Civil War, to which most of us did not even go, *our* war.

Only the other day, someone now just past thirty recounted to me a childhood memory: his mother knocking her head against a refrigerator door, over and over, until his sullen and blustering older brother had promised he would not go to Spain after all. That older brother has become, only too aptly, a millionaire; but it was a long haul from the kitchen in Brooklyn to his present office in Toledo or South Bend or wherever. God knows the "not yet!" we prayed under our breath was answered. We have notoriously had the most prolonged youth on record: a youth wished on us by our predecessors of the 1920's, who could conceive of no greater good, and from which we must recover as from a wasting disease. To the younger generation now defining itself, I am grateful for at least one thing—it has lifted from me the burden of being young, under which I had begun to feel myself ageing without dignity, like some fading beauty obliged to pretend her wrinkles do not exist. No one will, I hope, ever again refer to my fortyish contemporaries (now busy deploring the *much* younger young) as "young novelists," "young critics," "young intellectuals." We may now proceed to become grandfathers in peace.

To be sure, none of us will ever be as old as those who are now around thirty, just as none of us were ever as young as, say, Scott Fitzgerald; for the new young in America are mature with the maturity we dreamed. We ended their innocence before they knew they possessed it; and they passed directly from gradeschool to middle-age with a copy of *Partisan Review* or *Kenyon Review* as a passport—their only youth our youth, which is to say, the mythical youth of the '30's.

My own high-school age son, reliving for the third or fourth time the attitudes I first remember noticing in the freshman classes I taught just before World War II, complains sometimes that my generation has robbed his of the possibilities of revolt. He sees clearly

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enough that for him the revolutionary gesture would be an empty piece of mimicry, incongruous in a world which has found there is no apocalypse and that contemporary society threatens not exclusion and failure but acceptance and success. What he does not yet perceive is the even more crippling fact that, by anticipation, my generation has robbed his of new possibilities even of accommodation, of accommodation as a revolt against revolt. The single new slogan available to his generation is the pitiful plea: "Get off my back!" Yet it is they who should be on ours!

TO ME the most appalling aspect of the writing of the post-war generation in America, as of its life-style, is its familiarity. I will not conventionally deplore (though to deplore at all has become now the conventional form of our relationship) their sterility in art—their obsession with criticism. Each does what he can; and construing a poem by John Crowe Ransom, though it may not be as good as writing it, is considerably better than biting your finger-nails. Frankly, I like criticism; and I find myself nodding with approval from time to time over an attractively-written essay by a younger critic, perhaps some piece of high-handed abuse, only to wake with a start to the realisation that my approval is *self*-approval; that the ideas and attitudes are much like my own or those of my contemporaries, unearned intellectual income.

The young who should be hard at work, fatuously but profitably attacking us, spend a good deal of their time discreetly amending, expanding, analysing, and dissecting—when they are not simply cribbing from us. They fatuously attack chiefly themselves—and I fall into their trap, adding my voice to that of the schoolteacher telling them that they no longer read, or to that of the camp-director assuring them that they do not even make casual, summertime love with the vigour of the generations before them. How dull they are! Which is to say: How dull *we* are without our pasts; how banal our dissent from dissent without the living memory of a commitment to dissent.

The young are able to share our essential experiences only vicariously; neither the Great Depression which begins our youth nor the Second World War which ends it are to them more than class-room history. Yet our reaction to both they not only live again, but live *by*. How soon they grow comfortable (not rich, of course, but secure on a level that does not even have the baleful fascination of really cashing in) on echoes of echoes of the attitudes of the '30's or earlier.

The generations of the 1920's and the '30's existed for the imagination, as well as for the census-taker, because they had their own myths of themselves, their own books, their own programmes, their own journals. The young to-day do not even have a magazine. What, say, the *Hound and Horn* was for the '20's, what *Partisan Review* (even briefly the *New Masses*) for the '30's, is represented for the '50's by nothing at all—or worse. The most substantial and successful of recent literary quarterlies is the *Hudson Review*, a genteel, prematurely middle-aged version of the *Kenyon Review*, edited by younger men endowed with a solemnity before literature almost indistinguishable from *rigor mortis*, but sustained by contributions from older men not yet so close to death. The only "new" political journal is *Dissent*, edited chiefly by ageing radicals unwilling to leave the Garden of the '30's, and representing nostalgia at the point where it fades into academicism. The situation is superficially not unlike that in England, where two of the most recent journals, ENCOUNTER and the *London Magazine*, are presided over by two of the chief surviving representatives of the '30's, Stephen Spender and John Lehmann. In England, however, where there is considerable evidence of liveliness among the young, this seems to be more a matter of the failure of finances than of spiritual resources.

The new generation in the United States has found no new journal, because it has found no new voice and no new themes. I do not mean that there are no younger writers who are interesting and no books worth reading; I do mean that by and large there is no coherent body of new fiction or poetry which

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indicates a direction or creates a strikingly new image of the new age. The Angry Young Men of Britain have managed, whatever their shortcomings, to project themselves and their dilemma in such figures as Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim; for the nearest equivalent our new young must look to a middle-aged *New Yorker* regular, J. D. Salinger. The recent *Nation* symposium on the college student agrees that the one novel they feel is truly *theirs* is Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*; and I myself have seen several imitations of that book in prep-school literary magazines, some quite frankly labelled, "Holden Caulfield in Baltimore," "Holden Caulfield in Philadelphia," etc. Yet whatever the merit of Salinger's novel as a work of art or of Holden as an archetypal figure, the disturbing fact is that he is the creation of a man past thirty-five; and that he was first created in a story in *Good Housekeeping*, which took place before World War II. The same dark-haired, tall, lost, young man, broken loose from school and heading for a breakdown, travelled then through Europe as he travelled later through New York; he has only grown a little younger with the passage of fifteen or sixteen years, having been a college student at the moment of his birth and having become a secondary schoolboy in his reincarnation. He is not, in any case, a creation *of* the latest young—only, like so much else, a creation *for* them, an inheritance.

HAVING no new matter, the young need no new medium; the older quarterlies are open to them (and one can even earn academic credit toward promotion by publishing in former anti-academic journals like *Partisan Review*), as are the back pages of such weeklies as the *New Republic* and the *Nation*; the *New Yorker* itself is not unfriendly, and if one has the proper tone and themes, he is more than welcome in *Mademoiselle* and *Harper's Bazaar*. The latter, swollen with ads for ladies' lingerie and jewellery, pay extremely well, as do such recently founded, but not new, publications as *Playboy*, *Nugget*, etc. Such "men's magazines," which have become the favourite reading matter of male college students, particularly in private Eastern universities, are attempts to be what *Esquire* was in the early '30's, a happily commercial combination of semi-pornographic art and serious fiction. The coloured photograph has reached a point of technical excellence which makes *Playboy*'s nude "Playmate of the Month" more lush and convincing than all her predecessors; but no writers have been turned up so far to match *Esquire*'s Hemingway and Faulkner, so that few readers are tempted to read much beyond the description of how the photographers persuaded the "Playmate" to pose. It is, of course, doubtful that most of *Playboy*'s subscribers ever find out what the quality of its stories are; as the editors of *Harper's Bazaar* assume that their readers will seldom get past the ads, so the editors of the men's magazines assume that theirs will never get past the pin-ups. Printing stories amounts more to subsidising writers than really publishing them.

It is all, as Trotsky once remarked of quite another problem, like hitting one's head against an open door. When a young poet does appear (as one has recently in California), who bucks current fashion enough to choose William Carlos Williams rather than Wallace Stevens as a master, and gets himself censored —at this point *Life* magazine moves in with cameras; and he becomes merely another feature, lost somewhere between a contest for girl baton-twirlers and a spread on intercontinental ballistic weapons. Opportunities are distressingly plentiful everywhere—not only for publication and publicity, but for study and travel. Scholarships and fellowships abound; the great Foundations are eager to invest in the young, to send them to school or Europe or Asia or up and down America. Whatever the imagination can conceive, there is plenty of money to achieve; and when the imagination withers away before the limitless possibilities, money begins to usurp its function. Half of the academic young (and a higher and higher percentage of talented youth goes into academic life) are engaged in the kind of project that can be

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contrived only by a bureaucracy driven half-mad by money which increases faster than it is spent.

In a fantastic way, all the traditional strategies of the intellectual for evading the pressures of his world are transformed into subsidised programmes. Expatriation (renamed, of course, the Prix de Rome or Year-after-Year Abroad) is financed with the same even-handed munificence that sponsors a scholarly study of population pressures or right-left asymmetry in the atom. Only one goal becomes increasingly difficult—perhaps impossible: failure. Only one satisfaction is forbidden: violence.

FROM childhood on, the new young have been supervised by parents and teachers, influenced at one remove or another by Freud and the universal pacifism which attacked the American middle-class after the First World War, and deeply troubled over whether their charges should be allowed to play with toy bazookas, read the horrors of Grimm or of the latest comic book. Some have been forbidden all these, some allowed only therapeutic doses; on the whole, however, American society seems to have decided to let children and adolescents indulge vicariously in massive bouts of aggressiveness and terror. On the screen, in popular literature, on television and radio, these are permitted—with the tacit understanding: *this is all!*

Foreign observers find it easy to see the mythology of violence on which our children are raised: the crash of fist into jaw, the crumpling of bullet-riddled bodies, the bright red gobbets of blood. What they often miss is the anxiety which hedges that mythology about, the sense in which what is fostered with one hand is forbidden with the other: the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) meetings that discuss censorship; the testifying psychologists hinting darkly of evil to come; the popular guides for new mothers which advocate expurgating from the child's life all mention of disaster and death. This is the first of the contradictions which have conditioned our young.

Even more critical is the one which arises from the fact that the present generation is perhaps the first in the United States born into an era of social peace. Since our beginnings, violence has been the very pattern of American life: a continent violently appropriated, a national life created in revolution and defined in the midst of Indian warfare, the degrading brutality of slavery, and the conflict between competing national groups. Even after the closing of the frontier, the Civil War, and the end of mass immigration, violence persisted in America, not as the threat of war but as the shape of everyday life. World War I brought to our people for the first time the shocking vision (still at long distance) of violence as a threat imposed from outside on an entire nation. This left behind a further complicating factor: a heritage of compulsory pacifism for the young, and a pattern for the war-novel based on that pacifism which in almost forty years no novelist has managed to recast.

The imagination of the '20's lived off that remembered feast of terror as well as a mythology of murder and night-time pursuit bred by Prohibition. The '30's subsisted on the social violence always present in our life but exacerbated by the Great Depression: the death of Sacco and Vanzetti set the tone before the period had properly begun, and was succeeded by images of Pinkertons and smashed picket lines, Gastonia and Paterson and South Chicago; of Bonus Marchers and hostile troops; of the quieter terror of despair in the bread-lines and among the unemployed selling apples. The Civil War in Spain was a first climax; and the Second World War, with its guilt-ridden atomic conclusion, the end of all. At this point, the imagination faltered before the bureaucratisation of terror —not merely its immensity, but the dispersal of personal responsibility. Before Dachau, before Hiroshima, older perceptions of horror failed; and the older responses of sentimentality and righteous indignation (how hard it is to remember the furore over the Fascists' amateur bombing of Guernica) were revealed as impotent. Yet for the majority of Americans still, war remained something remote,

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something belonging "overseas"; and to many, though an occasion for suffering abroad, it proved an occasion for prosperity at home.

For our younger generations, The Second World War is a dim childhood recollection, reinforced by facts learned in the classroom from a teacher who seemed, perhaps, incomprehensibly and unforgivably "shook" by it all. The oldest of the newer young went off to that war in time for peace; the armed forces to them meant schools and post-war billets, chances for culture-mongering, sightseeing, or black-marketeering, depending on their tastes. The Spanish War, of course, scarcely exists for them at all. I can remember as early as 1941 overhearing one college girl complaining to another (they were studying, no doubt, for an exam in "Spanish Civilisation"): "Franco? Franco? I can never remember what *side* he was on!" Even the conflict in Korea, presumably *their* war, touched directly only a relative few; and the reactions even of those few were so set in the older G.I. pattern of cynicism and compulsory griping, that they were able to leave no record of it for the imagination.

SINCE Korea, we have lived under the Eisenhower dispensation in a kind of social truce. The sort of labour violence that made the typical street scene of my childhood (the mass picket-line, the striker clubbed, the scab kicked in the groin) is by and large out of sight and even of existence. In the South, to be sure, recent events have stirred up again riots and bombing; but even there events are strangely limited in their consequences. What looks like the beginnings of civil war ends with an irate citizen getting his hand cut by a bayonet; and meanwhile, concealed for a little beneath the upsurge of brutality, the long-term change proceeds: the lynching of negroes reaches the point of vanishing completely and a negro singer becomes a leading matinée idol of the whole nation. Outside of the South, certainly, the young must produce their own violence—with autos or knives or brickbats—if they are to have it at all.

The latest concern with the depredations of juvenile delinquents is sharpened, I think, because their outbreaks seem so isolated on a generally peaceful scene. I do not intend to say that violence has disappeared utterly from our lives; the daily newspaper is there to remind us it has not, but it has ebbed away. Never has the violence of the young seemed so non-functional, so *theoretical*, as it were—so sought after for its own sake. Most of the traditional motives for violence are gone: defending the frontier, making the world safe for democracy, teaching the Jew or Dago or Nigger his place, demonstrating against War and Fascism; the young have lost their faith in all the ancient excuses for violence; they have only a vestigial hunger for it for its own sake. It may have been in part self-deceit when my own generation hung Hitler in effigy, tore off its silk stockings and underpants to hurl into anti-Japanese bonfires—or rioted in the streets against the cops: crying all the while that these were blows for the cause of humanity. We felt at least the *need* to pretend, to invest our aggression in a sanctioned cause; and our actions were congruous with our world.

The young now, however, inhabit a world where their truer movies are not, like those of the '30's, black-and-white images of violent action, but grey ones of suffocating inaction. Compare, say, *I was a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* with *Marty*, in the latter of which nothing much happens at all, and violence has shrunk to a dream dreamed over the latest adventures of Mike Hammer, best-selling Private Eye. The function which Mickey Spillane performs for the semi-literate, the books of Hemingway and Faulkner and Nathanael West perform for the more informed and subtle young. They provide, that is to say, images of violence, in which the intellectual new young can find satisfaction.

Incapable of actual politics, the intellectual young sometimes find it possible to commit themselves to politics-once-removed: to a kind of ghostly anti-Fascism, or the rewarmed dream of the New Deal as embodied by Adlai Stevenson. A few—progressively fewer and fewer, I suspect—of the very young and

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bright (the sort of boy or girl, say, who goes through the New York public school system in an accelerated programme and graduates from a Special High school at fifteen) even manage to repeat the Communist experience, circulating official petitions against the Bomb and singing the pseudo-folk songs with which that Movement keeps alive its own sentimental version of the New Deal:

Was at Franklin Roosevelt's side
Just a while afore he died,
Said, "One world must come out of World War II"—
Yankee, Russian, White, or Tan—
Lord, a man is just *a man. . . .*
We're all brothers and we're only
Passing through!

It is the ghostliest manifestation of all; but outside of such tiny groups, few of the young so utterly inhabit the past. Yet the sensibility of all who read has been conditioned by the literature of the '30's, bereft now of political meaning but based on violence and postulated on the expectation of failure. Their dreams are possessed by images that their society cannot fulfil. In a world rent by violence, and plagued by disaster, America remains strangely immune at home. Only the newspaper headlines grow shriller, though they cannot disturb Ike's round of golf and the sense of security which it represents for the people to whom that game is a necessary symbol.

IT SEEMS impossible for the young to identify themselves with some distant cause. The sides are no longer so neatly defined, allegiances no longer so naïvely given. The daily newspaper falls from hands that clutch the latest reprinting of Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, which provides, in a way, a ready-made disillusionment applicable to any cause. The dream of violence and the fact of security; the dream of failure and the fact of success—here is the centre of our new comedy; but it is not yet written, for no one seems to stand at the proper vantage point.

The trouble is that there are at the moment no new social groups out of which a truly new generation can emerge. The '20's marked a climax in the breakthrough of provincial writers, of the displacement of New York and Boston by the mid-West as the source of imagery and thematic material in fiction and poetry; such books as Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Hemingway's *In Our Time* complete the process begun by *An American Tragedy* and *Main Street* and *Winesburg Ohio*. The '30's saw the inruption of urban Jews (the final blow in the smashing of the Anglo-Saxon domination of American culture) and the establishment of their pattern of struggle and accommodation as essential American themes. This pattern has remained, in diluted form, sovereign to this day. First rebellion; then a pleasant university job, teaching the young in turn to rebel (only vicariously, after a while); these then move on to their own jobs teaching the still younger how to. . . . There is no end.

Just as the second generation intellectuals in New York were moving from dispossession to possession, wave after wave of young Southerners were, as the '30's wore on, emerging from their areas of deprivation. They clutched not Marx in one hand and a "proletarian novel" in the other; but a volume of neo-metaphysical poetry in one and of "close" criticism in the other—only to disappear into the colleges to the North, still crying the slogans of Agrarianism to their students, who were, alas, only interested in John Donne.

The first pity of the contemporary situation is that the relationship of the new young to the generations just before them is that of pupil to teacher, their common ground the school-room. No longer is the young writer, bored in college, able to set up against the teacher who bores him the image of some lonely poet slumped over his empty Pernod glass in a Parisian café. The lonely poet *is* the teacher, and if he is momentarily in Paris (or Athens or Rome), he is there to give a series of lectures under the auspices of the State Department. On the other hand, we who are teachers no longer have the privilege of seeing before us alien minds with destinies quite different from our own, chafing to be

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free as we would wish them to be free, but as we cannot, of course, *teach* them to be. Not only are the new young our students; they are our younger brothers, our nephews, the children of our best friends, following behind us, and distinguishable from our shadows only when they, dutifully and perfunctorily, raise an occasional cry of protest against us.

How committed they are in advance to academic life or the salons of upper bohemia or suburban peace! Ever more young men arise out of a world gone prosperous to the core, and head for the places which we before them have already occupied, mapped, and cleared for comfortable living.

IN THIS respect, the situation of our new young is completely different from that of their opposite numbers in England. The young British writer has the inestimable advantage of representing a new class on its way into a controlling position in the culture of his country. He is able to define himself against the class he replaces: against the ideal of "Bloomsbury," which is to say, against a blend of homosexual sensibility, upper-class aloofness, liberal politics, and avant-garde literary devices. When he is boorish rather than well-behaved, rudely angry rather than ironically amused, when he is philistine rather than arty—even when he merely writes badly, he can feel he is performing a service for literature, liberating it from the tyranny of a taste based on a world of wealth and leisure which has become quite unreal. His books are, indeed, about the comedy of his relationship to the writers of the '30's (who are not only a generation but a class away from him) and he finds it easy enough to reject them.

He is not in any case excoriating (merely in order to be as nasty in his own way as they were, and are, in theirs) predecessors who are scarcely different from himself. The British writer in Swansea or Reading is a long way from Oxford and Cambridge, and merely to report what life is like in such places is to have found a new and fertile subject matter. American writers are, however, at least two generations deep in their Swanseas and Readings—in Bloomington (Indiana) or Madison (Wisconsin) or Moscow (Idaho). The baby-sitter moving, soiled diaper in hand, across a declassed and blighted landscape is no longer for us a sufficient muse; and our own tradition of strategic bad writing goes back as far as Melville.

Even the main sub-divisions within our new generation are second-hand, reflections of the older ones between New Yorker and Southerner, urbanite and agrarian (theoretical now, since the two are likely to be teaching in the small mid-Western town), sociologue and new critic, contributor to *Partisan Review* or *Kenyon Review*. Long since, our Augustan peace has blurred those once bitter distinctions. This is an age of interfaith tolerance, after all; and only an occasional challenge to a duel disturbs the truce that finds Philip Rahv and Allen Tate presiding over the same school for training young critics, who may, indeed, bypass the traditions of both masters and be translated directly into the back pages of the *New Yorker*.

IT IS, however, worth distinguishing still the major sub-groups within the new generations. First, the New York academics, who represent the latest form of status-striving among descendants of East European immigrants. In the first generation, there was a simple-hearted drive to found fortunes in woollens, ladies' underwear, junk—no matter; in the second, an impulse to enter the (still financially rewarding) respectability of the public professions of law and medicine; in the third, an urge to find a place in publishing and the universities, to become writers and intellectuals. In my own generation, there are notorious cases of men with no taste (much less any love) for literature becoming critics out of sheer bafflement. Never have so many natural operators and minor machiavellians pushed so eagerly and with less reason into the academy. The old tragedy of the poet forced into manufacturing paper bags becomes the new comedy of the prototycoon lecturing on the imagery of Wallace Stevens.

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The New York intellectual in academia is typically a product of Columbia (though he may also have gone to some large, mid-Western university to get away from home), a student of Lionel Trilling, who has received his finishing touches at the Kenyon School of Letters, or one of the British Universities (preferably Downing College at Cambridge) or the Harvard Graduate School. Nurtured on critical dialectics and trained in "close reading" by the New Critics, he (a little ostentatiously) handles a body of learning appalling in scope. This learning is deep and real, though such writers do not carry it lightly; and they are never, therefore, guilty of gross lapses like those of the more sketchily informed younger British writers—like Kingsley Amis, for instance, who is able to refer quite blandly in an American publication to Faulkner's lack of humour.

In addition to contributing to a vast, communal, talmudic commentary on the literary canon defined in the '20's and '30's—Melville, Faulkner, Stevens, etc.—such intellectuals normally occupy themselves with problems of "Popular Culture" or the "Mass Arts." Indeed, there is a sense in which this is their special subject; though here, too, they are likely to follow the lead of such a writer of the '30's as Dwight Macdonald. Among writers of this breed, such a concern is in part an inverted snobbism, a resistance to culture-mongering, which leads them to prefer a standard Hollywood Western to an "Art Film," and boxing to ballet. It is also, however, a kind of vestigial anti-bourgeois politics: a protest against the vulgarisation of life in a commercial society; and finally, it is a professional protest against a world which will sponsor and support them, but which will not look up from the latest copy of *Life* to read their works or those they admire.

Yet they are, after all, members of the first generations to have grown up under the full impact of triumphant mass culture; and it is their interest in this subject which connects the New York intellectuals with their British contemporaries (who, however different in other respects, share a concern with jazz, say, and science fiction—a sense that these give direct evidence of their new situation), and even with their less literate confrères, right down to the current highschooler. The first cultural snobbism of the very newest young tends to be based on taste in jazz. "Do you dig Bird?" that is to say, "Do you like the music of Charlie Parker?" is a question that separates those in the know from those who are "nowhere"; and beyond the "Bird" there are ever-retreating horizons of Modern or Progressive Jazz. "It's a way of life," I remember hearing a young drummer in Missoula, Montana, explain quite solemnly to a graduate student, who had asked him why, if he read books (he was an admirer of Norman Mailer) he also blew jazz. "A way of life." I suppose it is also a way of life to the high school kids I used to watch this past summer in Washington Square Park in New York, their shirts unbuttoned to the waist and a pair of bongo-drums between their knees.

Expectedly enough, the nearest thing to a spokesman for the very new young is (or rather was briefly over the past couple of years—in and around New York) Jean Shepard, a disc-jockey with some training in psychology, who used to lecture his listeners on the perils of conformism when he was not spinning records or singing a commercial which began:

Nedicks, shmeedicks,
Double deedix,
Pipkins all agree . . .

Under his guidance, highly disorganised meetings (he preferred to call them "mills") were held in some Eastern colleges, at which he spoke endlessly, while the audience clambered around the hall, making a racket and turning off and on the lights. He finally gathered together his "Night People," those who listened to his programme after midnight, in a kind of public demonstration at which several hundred kids were supposed to fly four-inch kites to express their contempt for everything ("Go fly a kite!"). Quite appropriately, on the appointed day, the wind failed to blow, and the Night People trickled off sullenly.

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THE SITUATION in American Popular Culture is, at the moment, a thoroughly absurd one. On its own level, it has never been in a duller or less promising condition. Movie houses close down or play to smaller and smaller audiences—more and more, just the young; though in my own town this year for the first time in history there was no appreciable jump in box-office receipts when college began. Popular music is in so dismal a state that the disc-jockeys, to fill their time, have to play a larger and larger proportion of revivals of old hit tunes; Broadway subsists on importations and revivals and especially the rewriting of its own dramatic repertoire as musical comedies. Everywhere Popular Culture begins to live parasitically on its own past (the rôle of old movies on T.V. is too well known to need more than a bare reference). On the other hand, everyone, and not least the highbrows, wants to *read* about popular culture. There have been two recent books anthologising the mass of new writing on the subject, and one of them is at the moment being distributed as a bonus by a large Book Club. The study of popular culture threatens itself to become a branch of popular culture.

The interest of the urban academics in the "mass arts" is matched in intensity by that of the radicals-once-removed, who may, indeed, sit side by side with them (they are more distinct ideally than in action) in a New York University or Harvard classroom. Such belated or symbolic revolutionaries, the youngsters who insist on reliving step by step the political past of the '30's, may have become (if they are old enough) Trotskyites in 1945 or 46, and certainly now subscribe to *Dissent*, approving especially the articles blasting Lionel Trilling or David Riesman, who are portrayed as arch-defenders of the *status quo*, and to whom they are bound by spasms of filial rejection. They cannot, however, in rôle or function distinguish themselves from their colleagues who admire Riesman and Trilling and subscribe to ENCOUNTER. They, too, sit behind desks in the offices of Rinehart or Doubleday; they, too, teach at Columbia or Minnesota or Brandeis University; and the Ford Foundation is only too delighted to subsidise what their politics has largely become: the writing of histories of the radical past. Needless to say, their youth, too, comes at second-hand.

If on his Left, the urban intellectual finds a *Dissent*-er; on his Right (this time, say, in R. P. Blackmur's class in The School of Letters or at a lecture in Cambridge by F. R. Leavis), he may find a writer for the *Hudson Review*: a limp, Hugh Kenner-ish admirer of Ezra Pound or Wyndham Lewis, dreaming that all their manly spite and vigour are his own; and writing careful exegeses of the *Cantos*, in which he conceals certain bitter political comments for the initiated. It is a figure like Yvor Winters that he is likely to emulate, finding in him a moral ferocity not incompatible with a Christian gentleman's version of taste. Such a young intellectual sometimes imagines a pure politics of the literary Right, which would make clear to anyone with real sensibility how a love of the best in art and a dignified McCarthyism can go hand in hand. It is these Right-wing purists who like to think of themselves as the new radicals, isolated and despised by liberals with hardening arteries and professorships; but they, too, are welcome among the "celebrities" on Mike Wallace's T.V. interview programme; for they, too, are still fighting in terms of a concept of Right and Left antiquated enough to seem undisturbing in any parlour.

BEYOND all these groups (and within them) are the homosexuals, the staunchest party of all. Indeed, one feels sometimes that homosexuality is the purest and truest protest of the latest generation, not a burden merely, an affliction to be borne, but a politics to be flaunted. Certainly, there is a logic to their identification of their sensibility with that of the artist in a country like America, where an undue interest in the arts is likely to bring on a boy the stigma of being a "sissy." Unlike England, America has no long tradition of allowing the homosexual to tyrannise over literary taste, nor indeed a tradition of fiction asserting (behind the most

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perfunctory of disguises) homosexual responses to experience as the cultivated norm. The sort of thing which would seem in Britain dull and routine, trapped in a world of platitudes as old as Oscar Wilde, strikes an American reader as comparatively fresh. The earliest work of Truman Capote—or more strikingly of Carson McCullers—as well as such a recent novel as James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, seem in our context to be conquests of new areas of feeling, an opening up. On the stage and in the movies, a similar break-through occurs on the middle-brow level; the young men with bare chests (all looking like Marlon Brando) and the middle-aged slatterns who assault their purity (all looking like Anna Magnani) become standard not only on Broadway but in movie houses in the remotest mountain town; while such films as *Picnic* propose to the American woman the homosexual's ideal of the handsome young man as her own. Leopold and Loeb are suddenly exhumed from comparative obscurity to be made the centre of two recent novels and one current play.

Implicit in the whole trend is a certain impatience with the customary taboos and restraints; and particularly in its highbrow manifestations the celebrations of homosexual sensibility implies a rejection of the ideal of the monogamous family and of men who are men (i.e., Gary Cooper). It is, perhaps, more than that, too: the last possible protest against bourgeois security and the home in the suburbs in a world where adultery is old hat. But they come so fast, the new homosexuals, queen treading on queen: and we are so ready for them, so eager to prove our own emancipation by understanding and accepting. It is the same old trap, though more elegantly upholstered. For each group there is its fitting and proper mode of accommodation; this one usually finds publication in the pages of *Harper's Bazaar*, *Mademoiselle*, and *Vogue*. Indeed, such publication is their passport into an upper bohemia, where good manners are appreciated and high style is savoured, a world of chic, eager to read the latest effete exploitation of the Faulknerian scene and the Faulknerian themes of dissolution and infertility.

WHAT is finally most distressing about all this is not that the devices of the young are so dismal and unfruitful, but that they are not even theirs. If I draw as dark a picture as legitimate distortion can make of their plight, it is not to blame them but to blame us who have dreamed them—and have taught them the dream as they sat before us in class. I would not rob them of freewill and the possibility of guilt—but *they* must blame themselves. It is depressing enough to look in the mirror the young hold up to nature and see a host of little Trillings and Riesmans; more horrible yet to think of an endless proliferation of James Burnhams and Arthur Millers; and the mind falters at the thought of catching sight of something one fears is intended to be oneself. Enough, dear friends, and students, enough!

Yet it does not matter really—for so long as the imagination lives, every plight is potentially the stuff of a vision that will transcend it by capturing it. It is not generations, thank God, that write books or come to understanding; it is men. The generations are what the books are about, what the understanding comes to terms with. At the moment, one has the sense of young writers at a loss for a subject: poets all technique and no theme; novelists desperately contriving factitious subjects because they need somehow to keep writing books. But the subject is there: the comedy of themselves in their passionate and absurd relationship to us. When a young writer arises who can treat this matter in all its fresh absurdity, we will be done with symposia on the Younger Generation, with self-recrimination and sullen defensiveness and abuse. And I (I fondly hope) will be leaning from a window to cheer him on and to shake down on his head the torn scraps of all surviving copies of this article.

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Peregrine Worsthorne

A V.I.P. in Morocco

When the Red Carpet Fails to Unroll

THE official visitor's view of most countries is either from some lofty pinnacle—usually the roof garden of the capital's most expensive hotel—or, when he is on ground level, from behind tinted spectacles provided by the Ministry of Propaganda. Morocco, however, is a notable exception to this rule. For there, far from being privileged, the official visitor probably enjoys a more precarious existence than anyone else in the Sultan's kingdom. Instead of seeing only what his hosts wish him to see, he is immediately brought face to face with precisely what they would prefer to hide. From the moment of his arrival in Casablanca, the guest of the Government learns that the Government, in our Western sense of the word, does not exist. To be a State visitor is to realise just how absurd such a description is in a country which really cannot be called a State at all.

In most countries it is the lower rungs of the national ladder—the slums and dockyards, etc.—that are unlikely to impress the foreign visitor who, for this reason, is encouraged to stay as high up the scale as possible. But in Morocco the reverse is true. Ground level in Morocco is enchanting. It is only on ascending to the V.I.P. level that enchantment turns into disillusion. If, therefore, one wants to discover Morocco's seamy side—and every journalist, in any country, wants nothing better—then the best way to do it is to be invited as a State visitor.

I share with a correspondent of *The Times* the distinction of being one of the first foreign journalists to see independent Morocco from this particular vantage point. "You will not be our guests, you will be our prisoners," the Chargé d'Affaires had said kindly in London when issuing the invitations. "My Government will make itself responsible for all your needs while in Morocco." As if to reassure us of his Government's ability to honour this obligation, he then presented us with cartons of Lucky Strike cigarettes. Twelve hours or so later we touched down in Casablanca.

TIME 4.30 a.m. This surely is an hour when being a V.I.P. might come in useful—a large car to waft one to a large hotel, everything laid on. But there was no one to meet us. In my then innocence I felt rather embarrassed, not for myself but for my hosts. The Moroccans make such a thing of hospitality. The poor man who had been detailed to meet us had probably overslept. What hideous Moorish punishment would be meted out to him for such a dereliction of duty? I watched the surly face of the immigration officer as I answered his routine questions—purpose of visit, permanent address while in Morocco—expecting the scowl to turn swiftly to deference when I replied: "Guest of the Government and c/o the Foreign Ministry." But instead of deference, bland indifference.

What does a V.I.P. do when the red carpet fails to materialise? He cannot pick up his bag, hail a taxi, and behave like any other tourist whose plans have gone awry. He doesn't know where to tell the taxi to go. So

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we just sat waiting on the airport kerb. By the time it was light our patience was exhausted. We telephoned the Foreign Ministry. There was no reply. We telephoned an hour later. There was a reply, but it made no sense. The Foreign Minister was away with the Sultan in the mountains; the head of the Press department was away somewhere else; no one had ever heard of us. At great expense we hired a car to take us to Rabat, some sixty miles away, where we arrived in time for lunch. None of the hotels had rooms booked in our names. By this time, angry, hungry, and bloody-minded, we decided to counter-attack by ordering a large and delicious lunch in the best French restaurant at our absent host's expense. When the formidable bill came we ordered it to be referred to the Moroccan Government. Uproar ensued. We might just as well have announced we were wanted criminals. The entire hotel staff took to emergency stations, exits were blocked, the manager alerted. We assumed, of course, that they took us for unusually brazen impostors, and only when the commotion had reached its climax—or what we thought was its climax—did we produce our credentials—personal letters from the Foreign Minister and from the Prime Minister—backing up our claim to V.I.P. status. But these, to our amazement, made the situation worse. Far from appeasing the hotel manager they sent him into even worse paroxysms. He was not afraid of us being bogus, he finally explained. What really frightened him was the awful suspicion that we were actually genuine.

The Moroccan Government, it transpired, were already his largest debtor, owing him some hundred millions of francs for past official hospitality. The one species, he explained, who most emphatically were *persona non grata* in his establishment were guests of the Government.

We were sympathetic but firmly refused to pay. A really good row, we rightly guessed, might serve to bring us to the attention of the authorities. It did. After about an hour of telephoning, the Foreign Ministry sent down a magnificent Moor, six foot tall, beautifully dressed in the latest Fifth Avenue styles, who introduced himself as the Chef de Protocol. He appeared delighted to meet us, made no attempt to explain why he had delayed indulging himself in this pleasure, and grandly produced a Parker 51 with which he offered to sign our bill. No, the hotel insisted on hard cash. But he had no cash. "Did the manager not accept the signature of a high official in the Moroccan Government?" No, the manager did not. Eventually, taking pity on both sides, we paid the bill ourselves. This, said the official, would never happen again. It was all the fault of the French hoteliers who were determined to frustrate the régime. He would give us a special warrant that would smooth our way in future. The special warrant looked magnificent. It was a gold-embossed card requiring all and sundry to facilitate us in every possible way free of charge. We tried it out that evening in a luxurious hotel actually owned by the Moroccan Government. It worked for the first course but before the meat arrived the manager had second thoughts. He very much regretted that the card, although stamped with the royal seal, was without any official signature. He could not, therefore, continue to serve the meal unless we made ourselves responsible for payment.

SUCH was our first day as V.I.P.s in Morocco. I do not make so much of our vicissitudes out of any desire to mock the Moroccan Government. I mention them because they brought home to me what weeks of diligent enquiry might never have so clearly elicited: namely, that it is extremely unwise to take such terms as State or Government or Official very seriously when applied to a country like Morocco. If one is invited by a girl of four to her dolls' house for tea it would be silly to expect to get anything real to eat or drink. Similarly, if one is invited as a State visitor to Morocco, it is silly to expect to be met at the airport. But the fact that we did expect this, and were disappointed when it did not materialise, suggests that even the most rigorous sceptics find it virtually impossible not to be taken in by the ritual phrases

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and symbols that newly independent countries use. The best way, therefore, for a foreigner to learn the truth about the Moroccan Government is to be its guest. The Moroccans, as individuals, are a wonderfully hospitable people. To be the guest of any individual Moroccan, however poor, is always a memorable experience. But to be invited by Morocco itself is plain awful, for the very good reason that Morocco as such just does not exist.

How could it be otherwise? When the French occupied Morocco in 1913, less than half a century ago, it was in much the same condition as it had been for one thousand years—a hotch-potch of warring tribes. The French army imposed order and the French Government then proceeded to turn the country into an extension of Metropolitan France. They did not destroy the Arab towns or indeed the Arab way of life, but simply built French towns alongside, as well as superb roads, railways, ports, hotels, resorts. In no other country in the world has medievalism been so agreeably blended with all the comforts and facilities of modern life. Under French rule, Morocco blossomed into the most orderly, productive, comfortable, and agreeable area in Africa or the Levant. What existed of Arab civilisation was carefully preserved. But the impression a visitor gets is of being in a part of France which happens to contain beautifully-preserved Arab remains. These enchant the visitors in much the same way as Britain's feudal remains enchant the visitor. So far as everyday life is concerned, everything in Morocco is overwhelmingly French. Driving down the magnificent coast road from Casablanca to Rabat is like driving down the corniche in the South of France. Hotels, restaurants, factories, garages, all are French-owned and operated; roads, railways, airlines are all French-maintained. The mere granting of independence eighteen months ago has not changed all this. One still gets the impression of being in France. But to-day it is a decidedly eerie impression. For although the French continue to go through all the motions—the hotels, railways, airlines, etc., continue to function as well as ever—it is rather like watching a chicken strutting around after its head has been chopped off.

The Moroccans, of course, are desperately anxious to do everything they can to prolong the death dance, short of actually reanimating the corpse. If the French were to withdraw too suddenly, the whole network of transport, trade, industry, civil administration, and social amenities would be endangered. But my impression, talking to the French, was decidedly that they did not intend to stay. So far the exodus has been fairly modest. Of the 300,000 Frenchmen in Morocco at the time of independence, nine in ten still remain. But they have no long-term future, and they know it. Instead of ploughing back their profits, French businessmen are investing outside Morocco. Building and expansion have come to a standstill. Thousands of small property owners—farmers, hoteliers, grocers, etc.—cannot so easily escape. Unless they are prepared to sacrifice all their savings and return penniless to France they must first sell their properties; and there is no one to buy them. If, however, they cannot leave themselves, they are determined that their children shall. For what does the future hold for the French? If the Moroccans succeed, through French co-operation, in building up an indigenous economy, in developing a national system of education, in training enough native doctors, teachers, technicians, civil servants, army officers, they will then feel free to dispense with the French. If they fail, the country will become so disorganised and chaotic that life there will not be worth living. Either way, therefore, the French stand to lose in the long run.

THE French have no patience with the argument that, given goodwill and patience, independent Morocco can develop into a country where Arab and French can live side by side to their mutual advantage. They certainly never really believed this when they were in command. In the days of the Protectorate, Morocco was administered quite brazenly for the French by the French. The fact that Moroccans also benefited was not

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the object but the by-product of French rule. The French have no confidence in the by-products of Moroccan rule.

Are the French being excessively pessimistic or defeatist? I do not think so. Sitting over cognac in one of the innumerable French cafés in Rabat, it is easy to indulge in wishful daydreams. Rabat is an enchanting town, the perfect blending of European and Moorish architecture, and European and Moorish ways of life. It displays none of the squalor, sloth, dirt, and degeneracy of a Levantine city. Under its spell it seems quite possible that the French-educated Moroccans should do for North Africa what the English-educated Americans did in the 18th century for North America: turn a new continent, or at least the northern part of it, into an extension, with modifications, of western civilisation. This, many Moroccan leaders will tell you, is precisely what they wish to do. Once Algeria has won independence, they envisage a North African Federation, with its religious roots in Islam, its political, cultural, and economic roots in France, linked politically and militarily to the United States. Sipping cognac in Rabat, this all sounds so easy, so sensible.

But who is to bring this miracle about? What strikes the visitor to Morocco most forcibly is the extreme scarcity of men in any way capable of carrying through so massive a transformation. If one is invited to an official reception in Rabat, gathered around one will be the entire governing, professional, intellectual orders, all of whom can be shaken by the hand in the course of one evening. Out of the dozen or so qualified Moroccan doctors, several have had to be sent abroad as diplomatists. There was no one else to send. I talked to a high official in the Ministry of Economic Affairs who had never heard of Maynard Keynes—a good omen, perhaps, for Morocco's fiscal soundness, but it shows how low the educational level is even among the élite.

If the problem in Morocco was only one of maintaining order and of running a primitive economy, this tiny cadre of public servants and professional men might prove sufficient. But forty years of French colonialism have entirely changed the nature of the problem. Morocco has become accustomed to the external products of the West's secular, rational, science-oriented method of existence. The French will leave behind them accumulations of capital, industrial techniques, standards of material comfort, administrative methods, trade unions, a centralised State, a bureaucracy, political parties, public education—all of which must either be maintained or allowed to run down. Either course is perilous.

IF THE modern externals of Western society are to be maintained, it is clearly of vital importance that the complex system of spiritual, moral, and intellectual values, which alone explain the genesis of these products and which defines or limits the way they are used, should also be maintained. Now I do not doubt that some of the tiny group which at present holds power in Morocco are genuinely imbued with the values which alone give meaning and virtue to the West's technical achievements. But if the mere physical apparatus of a modern state is to be serviced and maintained, this group must be vastly and urgently expanded. I do not see myself how this dramatic expansion can come about without the numbers of Moroccans trained in Western techniques overwhelmingly exceeding the number of Moroccans sufficiently educated to prevent these techniques from being abused.

It seems to me, therefore, that the present rulers of Morocco, if they try to maintain the modern apparatus left behind them by the French, will create a new generation who do not share any of the restraints and values that French culture instilled into the present Founding Fathers of independent Morocco. If, on the other hand, they fail to produce the technicians, and as a result modern Morocco disintegrates, the social tensions will be equally dangerous. Forty years of industrialisation has created a Moroccan proletariat that would not tolerate any major breakdown in the economy, as well as accustoming the whole population to a standard of living that they would be ill-prepared to sacrifice.

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It seems to me, therefore, that the difficulties facing Morocco are much more deep-rooted than bubbling optimism in Rabat would suggest. It is, of course, perfectly true that the Sultan has shown great skill in preserving order among the tribes; that the Istiqlal, the ruling party, has come out plainly on the side of the West, and that the United States can probably be relied upon to see Morocco through its worst economic difficulties if France should decide to jettison the load. Noting these encouraging pointers a British commentator, writing in the Chatham House publication, *The World To-day*, concludes: "If Moroccans have the patience to acquire the technical skills necessary for the administration of a modern State, there is no reason why the country should not look forward to a prosperous and worthy future." Unfortunately, just as there is more to successful gardening than simply learning to use a rake or a hoe, so there is far more to state-making than acquiring technical skills. What frightens me, in fact, is that the acquisition of these skills will prove to be, not the condition of the new State's survival, but the agent of its decline. Cadillacs will replace the camel; skyscrapers the Berber tent; machine guns the tribal spear. One more rootless, modernised, culturally-castrated body politic will take shape.

Patrick Kavanagh

October

O LEAFY yellowness you create for me
A world that was and now is poised above time.
I do not need to puzzle out Eternity
As I walk this arboreal street on the edge of a town.
The breeze too, even the temperature
And pattern of movement is precisely the same
As broke my heart for youth passing.
  Now I am sure
Of something. Something will be mine wherever I am.
I want to throw myself on the public street without caring
For anything but the prayering that the earth offers.
It is October over all my life and the light is staring
As it caught me once in a plantation by the fox coverts.
A man is ploughing ground for winter wheat
And my nineteen years weigh heavily on my feet.

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Colin Welch

"Dear Little Noddy"

A Parent's Lament

IF YOU have small children and they don't like Noddy, you are very lucky. I have; they do; I am not. This insipid wooden doll, with its nodding head crowned with cap and bell, with its taxi and its friend Big Ears, has opened a rift between parents and children which time alone may heal. They love it; we don't. And we can't agree to differ, live and let live, because we parents have to sit and read the stuff to them.

The Noddy business has by now taken its place among Britain's major non-warlike industries, along with sauce-bottling, the pools, cheesecake photography and the manufacture of ice-lollies, righteous indignation, and plastic pixies. The business is founded on the mass-production of Noddy books, of which 12 million had been sold two years ago: 12 titles, that is to say, and about a million sold of each. The export branch produces Noddy books in countless foreign languages, including Tamil, Hebrew, and Swahili. By-products, controlled by five separate companies, include Noddy soap and Noddy chocolates, Noddy pyjamas and nighties, Noddy painting books, jig-saws, Christmas annuals, cut-outs on cereal packets and models ("smashing fun modelling Noddy and his friends: all easily made from Sculptorcraft Rubber Moulds"). Noddy has also appeared on television and the West End stage, though not yet at the Royal Court.

Noddy's onlie begetter is a former schoolmistress called Enid Blyton. She has been described by William Hickey as "a sweet-looking woman in her middle years. The outstanding thing about her is her eyes. They are deep and kind." The really outstanding thing about her is her industry. In the five years 1948–52 inclusive, she managed to fill nearly four close-printed columns of Whitaker's Cumulative Book List—261 titles by my count. In 1955, she clocked up 59 titles, more than a book a week (not all of them about Noddy, of course). Last year, flagging slightly, she only managed 28. She also produces a fortnightly magazine ("the only magazine I write"), runs four children's clubs (the Famous Five Club, the Busy Bees, the Sunbeam Society, and the Magazine Club), and personally answers a thousand or more fan-letters a week.

The scale of her activities has naturally aroused suspicion that she must be a corporate entity like Dumas et Cie, or even some sort of electronic brain. These allegations she indignantly denies: it is all her own work, all done by hand. "Once I get started," she has said, "I've just got to go on and on. Oh, I love it. . . . Stories flow from my imagination like cotton from a reel." According to her husband, "It has been a constant battle to restrain her from working. The sheer effort of turning out 10,000 words daily—sometimes 14,000—has resulted in heart-strain. She never lets up. . . . She is a remarkable woman, but now she must rest." 14,000 words daily—if we assume a seven-hour writing day—

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means 2,000 words an hour, about 33 words a minute, a word every two seconds. Miss Blyton's style may be flat, her material banal, her method unreflective; written at such a lick it is astonishing that her works make as much sense as they do. Measured beside this literary Stakhanovite, such prodigies of productivity as Trollope, Zola, and Balzac shrink to mere idle dilettantes.

MISS BLYTON is, by Johnson's definition, no blockhead. Even two years ago, the royalties on Noddy alone totalled £400,000. With an income estimated at £50,000 a year, she must be about the highest paid woman in the British Isles. It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that she writes only for money. She writes not merely to amuse, but to edify. Her art is not for art's sake. She is committed: she has A Message.

"Into my books," she says, "I pack ethical and moral teaching.... I do not write merely to entertain. My public, bless them, find in my books a sense of security, an anchor, a sure sense that right is always right and that such things as courage and kindliness deserve to be emulated." Thus does she range herself firmly with Dr. F. R. Leavis against Lord David Cecil's hedonistic æstheticism.

If not "merely" entertaining, however, the Noddy books undoubtedly do entertain the people they are meant to entertain. The sales are unanswerable—the more so, since the books could not possibly entertain anyone else. Noddy books are not enjoyed by grown-ups and forced upon children: they are enjoyed by children and forced upon grown-ups. The story behind practically every copy sold is of a delighted child and an adult's dead body.

The essence of a children's classic—perhaps of any classic—is that it can be enjoyed at a number of different levels. The adventures of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking-glass; the tales of Grimm and Andersen; the wistful nonsense of Edward Lear; Beatrix Potter's strange stories, in which the matter-of-fact surface half conceals a sort of mysterious poetry; The Wind in the Willows, Doctor Doolittle and Winnie the Pooh—all these books have delighted generations of children. They have also delighted generations of grown-ups. And when parents read them to their children, it is to experience a complex harmony of pleasures: they find delight in the book itself; they recapture the delight it once brought them as children; and they see awakened that same delight in a new generation. These books thus form a most precious link between the generations, binding them together, part of the family, forever part of the life of each member of it.

To compare, say, Winnie the Pooh with Noddy is not really unfair. Both appeal primarily to the same age group, both with complete success. In other respects, the difference is startling. The Pooh stories are written with wit, taste and economy of means, and with an almost magical felicity of form. For sheer craftsmanship take the story "in which Pooh and Piglet go hunting and nearly catch a woozle." The mounting suspense as these two enchanting fools plod round and round the tree in the snow, tracking first one woozle, then two, three, and four, and the effortless way in which the illusion is finally pricked, make this in miniature a perfect short story. Compared with such happy mastery, Noddy is mere drooling, shapeless meandering—"cotton from a reel."

If children enjoy Noddy, is that all that matters? Miss Blyton, of course, wouldn't think so; neither would I. By writing ruthlessly *down* to children, she does not merely bore and antagonise grown-ups. Her Noddy books also fail to stretch the imagination of children, to enlarge their experience, to kindle wonder in them or awaken their delight in words. They contain nothing incomprehensible even to the dimmest child, nothing mysterious or stimulating. They have no "contact with nescience"; they never suggest new and exciting fields to conquer. By putting everything within reach of the child mind, they enervate and cripple it. "Those children," says Miss Blyton, "who find exams easier to pass and scholarships easier to win, are nearly always those who have been much read to in their earlier years." It is hard to see how a diet of Miss Blyton could help with

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the 11-plus or even with the Cambridge English Tripos. It certainly did not help poor Christopher Craig, of whom, at his trial for murder, it was stated that "the only books he knows anything about are the books of Enid Blyton, which he gets other people to read for him."

THE idea that children should have special books is a fairly modern one. Until Victorian days, children by and large read grown-up books or none. In Noddy, "the book for children" is carried logically *ad absurdum*. Victorian children's books often involve long words and quite complex intellectual and moral problems. Since then children's books (not excluding "Winnie the Pooh" of course, in which "writing down" is used half-ironically) have been more and more closely geared to the supposed intellectual powers of their public. Enid Blyton is perhaps the first successful writer of children's books to write actually *below* her audience. "Only not-so-bright children like Enid Blyton," was the acid comment of a town librarian. "My books," replied Miss Blyton, somewhat irrelevantly, "are read in palaces as well as in working-class homes. They are suitable for every child's mentality." In fact, her appeal is not only to the not-so-bright. Her books seem to possess a mysterious fascination for all children, bright and not-so-bright alike.

To what ends, then, does Miss Blyton use her influence over children? It is not easy to say. For all her protestations of lofty purpose, there is little explicit moralising in the Noddy books. One can only go by the characters Miss Blyton appears to find sympathetic. Of these the chief is Noddy himself.

Noddy is not perhaps intended to be admirable. According to his creator, he "is like the children themselves, but more naïve and stupid. Children like that—it makes them feel superior. He is the helpless little man who gets into trouble and invites sympathy—a children's version of the early Charlie Chaplin." But he is undoubtedly intended to be attractive and influential. He is always "dear little Noddy"; he is "always so friendly and polite that everyone likes him"; "he is quite the nicest person in Toy Village"; he cleans his teeth, brushes his hair, polishes his shoes, drinks his milk, eats his bread; he can make children respect policemen, tidy their rooms, eat up their porridge; echoing his creator, he thinks it "good to work hard and earn lots of money"; he is also an artist who composes (or rather "feels coming," like Elgar) songs which, sung by the composer, are invariably received with rapturous enthusiasm. Mr. and Mrs. Tubby Bear like to hear one every morning; "Isn't he clever?" says Miss Rabbit; "How *does* Noddy think of his songs?" asks Miss Blyton: "no wonder everyone is clapping him and calling for more." Several critics have thought Wagner rash actually to incorporate in *Die Meistersinger* a melody, the Prize Song, which he himself declared to be of transcendent beauty, a masterpiece: wiser perhaps, to have funked the challenge and left it to the imagination. Miss Blyton is equally intrepid. Her pages are lavishly enriched with the fruits of Noddy's genius, of which the following—greeted as usual with universal applause and cheers—is a fair sample:

"I'm only little Noddy
Who's got a song to sing,
And a little car to ride in,
And a bell to jingle-jing.
I've a little house to live in
And a little garage too.
But I've something BIG inside me,
And that's my love for YOU—
My love for ALL of you!"

The "little-man" sentimentality and crooner's clichés of this declaration are in fact redolent less of "the early Charlie Chaplin" than of the mature Norman Wisdom—to whom in other respects Noddy bears a certain resemblance.

HIS poetic gifts apart, to call Noddy "more naïve and stupid" than any normal child is a gross understatement. His imbecility is almost indecent. It is somehow symbolised by the ceaseless nodding of his head, a movement—presumably involuntary—upon which great emphasis is placed. The

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clinical explanation of this palsy or St. Vitus's dance is that the victim's head is supported by a spring. Yet, in the light of Noddy's manifest feeble-mindedness, it is bound to acquire a deeper and more sinister significance. One recalls Zinsser's description of St. John's Evil, a mediæval scourge in which whole villages, driven mad by want and misery, went about shaking and nodding. As characters in Dickens and Wagner have their own catch-phrases or themes, so Noddy nods—or "nid-nods." "There goes the little nodding man," cries everyone in Toyland. "Look at his head nid-nodding as he drives." Noddy himself seems to regard his affliction with pride; it also appears to give pleasure to others. Noddy's milkman is paid in nods: "He tapped Noddy's head again as soon as it began to stop nodding and made it nod again, up and down, up and down. 'Payment for *two* bottles,' he said."

More striking even than Noddy's imbecility is his timidity, which again borders on the pathological. Courage may be "a thing to be emulated"; it is not emulated by Noddy. He is terrified of everything. His friend, Big Ears, a 100-year-old Brownie who acts as a sort of father- or male-nurse symbol, knocks at the door: " 'Rat-a-tat-a-tat.' Little Noddy woke up in a hurry and almost fell out of bed in fright. His little wooden head began to nod madly." Bouncing balls scare him so much that he wants to get down a rabbit-hole. He is terrified by the sea ("It's too big. Let's go and find a dear little sea. This one's too big and it keeps moving") and by holidays: " 'They sound sort of prickly,' said Noddy. Big Ears laughed and laughed. 'Not *holly*-days made of prickly *holly*!' he said" (Big Ears' laughter is timely: this is about as near a joke as Miss Blyton gets). When four golliwogs steal his taxi and all his clothes (including "his dear little trousers and shoes"), "Noddy couldn't move an inch. He was so full of alarm that he couldn't say a word.... He wriggled and shouted and wailed 'You bad, wicked golliwogs'.... Noddy was all alone in the dark wood. 'Help!' he called. 'Oh, help, help, HELP! I'm little Noddy and I'm all alone and LOST.' " He is overwhelmed by self-pity. "He stumbled along through the trees, tears running down his cheeks.

'I've lost my hat,
I've lost my car;
I simply don't know
Where they are!
I'm all alone;
Won't ANYBODY
Come to help
*Poor little Noddy?' "**

Help, of course, is soon forthcoming, in the shape of Big Ears and Mr. Plod the policeman, who arrest the golliwogs and restore Noddy's possessions to him. Though utterly resourceless himself, Noddy is never in trouble for long. There is always somebody to run to, someone to whine and wail at. The machinery of benevolent authority (Big Ears) or of the state (Mr. Plod) can always be invoked to redress the balance between cowardice, weakness, and inanity on the one hand, and vigour, strength, and resource on the other. In some respects, the Noddy books give the impression of being an unintentional yet not wholly inaccurate satire on—or parody of—the welfare state and its attendant attitudes of mind.

IF NODDY is "like the children themselves," it is the most unpleasant child that he most resembles. He is querulous, irritable, and humourless.† " 'Whoo-ooo-ooo!' said the

* One of the books is entitled *Be Brave, Little Noddy!* Fortified by the moral support of Big Ears and by copious draughts of "raspberry syrup," Noddy manages to sing "A Brave Song":

"Oh, what does it matter (sniff, sniff, sniff)
When things go wrong (oh, dear, oh, dear!)
I'll sing and I'll whistle
The whole day long! (sniff-sniff-sniff)".

† Humour is not perhaps Miss Blyton's own strongest point. In *Take It From Here*, Joy Nichols once declared that "her little boy was never happier than when he was curled up in front of the fire with Enid Blyton." This harmless pleasantry produced explosions of indignation from "Green Hedges"—Miss Blyton's house at Beaconsfield. "Shocking, disgusting," commented her husband: "We were furious." Sir William Haley and the B.B.C.'s chief of variety were bombarded with demands for a deletion and apologies. My own request, couched in terms of conventional civility, for an interview in connection with this article also produced unexpectedly dramatic repercussions. I have accordingly relied where quoting Miss Blyton on statements already published.

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wind at the top of its voice, and blew some flowers out of a jug on Noddy's table. 'Don't,' said Noddy. 'Now look at the mess you've made! It's my busy morning, too!' " A clockwork clown turns somersaults in Noddy's garden. "Do stop, Clown," Noddy frets, "you always make me feel so dizzy. . . . Oh, don't start going head-over-heels again. Look, you've squashed one of my plants." He is unnaturally priggish. "I would rather like to see you knock a lamp-post down," says the clown: "BANG! What a noise it would make." "Now you're being silly," is Noddy's sanctimonious reply. He is also a sneak. An elephant from Mr. Noah's Ark wants Noddy to drive it to the wood, so that it can knock down trees: "that's what real elephants do," it explains. Noddy, of course, is "alarmed." "That's silly and dangerous . . . you're a very bad elephant. I shall tell Mr. Noah of you." The elephant struggles into the taxi. " 'Please get out,' begged little Noddy"—all to no avail. Off they go, Noddy's head nodding sadly ("Whatever was he to do?") and the elephant thoroughly enjoying itself, blowing the horn and making everyone jump "dreadfully." Soon the elephant goes to sleep. Noddy's head nods "madly"; he smiles to himself: "he knows what to do." "What to do" is, of course, to drive the elephant to Mr. Noah's Ark, report it, and request that it be smacked: "Certainly, certainly, certainly," says Mr. Noah.

In this witless, spiritless, snivelling, sneaking doll the children of England are expected to find themselves reflected. From it they are to derive "ethical and moral" edification. But Noddy is not merely an example: he is a symbol. Noddy, according to Miss Blyton, "is completely English, and stands for the English way of life. He's very popular in Germany. It's interesting to think that a generation of young Germans is absorbing English standards and English morals." The Russians, it seems, have pirated some of Miss Blyton's books, but not yet Noddy. "I wish they would," says Miss Blyton. "I don't care about the royalties—I should like the Russian children to read English stories. It might help them to understand our way of life." It is disquieting to reflect that they might indeed.

It remains only to add that Miss Blyton was a strong supporter of Suez. So, I bet, was Noddy: indeed, circumstantial evidence might suggest that he was the moving spirit behind the whole enterprise.

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Robert Guillain

Not by Rice Alone . . .

A Report from Hongkong

THE presence of discontent in China may have been denied by propagandists in the West, but it was very well known to the party leaders. Moreover, Mao Tse-tung and the collective leadership in Peking had retained enough insight to realise that the time had come to do something about it. For seven long years the party had brought the people to white heat, shaped them and hammered them. As a good Marxist with a feeling for the expediency of antithesis, Mao saw it was time to reverse the rôles. It was the moment to put the party on the anvil and re-forge it under the blows of popular feeling.

The new policy began in the spring of 1956 when the famous slogan "let a hundred flowers bloom" was first put out in Peking. It was followed a year later by Mao's speeches of February 27 and March 12 on "contradictions." Until June, Mao's theses on the right way of treating contradictions were studied in the party, but were not published. However, on April 13 the *People's Daily* dealt with the essential points in a long leading article that was significant enough to be immediately reproduced in *Pravda*. With engaging candour it admitted that there were tensions between the people and the People's Government. The chief cause of this "contradiction" was "bureaucratism." Communists no longer knew what was happening among the masses; they were deaf to the complaints of the people; they had "grossly violated the rights and interests of the masses" and had even "exerted brutal pressure." In so doing they had aroused the natural resentment of the people.

The newspaper then announced a "rectification" campaign, which was to be conducted on three levels: (1) discussion of the people's grievances; (2) confession by the Communist cadres of their errors; (3) education of the masses to make them more Marxist so that they would understand that a great deal of time and effort was still required before they could achieve socialism.

A central committee directive issued on April 27 and published on the 30th set the rectification movement going. It was to last six months, that is, to November 1.

Within a few days the masses of Chinese were swept into one of those whirlwind campaigns which the régime is so expert at organising. From Peking to the most remote village, 600 million Chinese met for discussion and criticism. At countless gatherings throughout the country they spoke out more openly than they had ever done before. There was no institution, no administrative centre, no small market town where the citizens were not summoned to a forum at which, in contrast to former occasions when counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the people were sought out, a new type of hunt was set on foot, a hunt for "contradictions" and failings. And the watchword was no longer: "be silent." It was: "speak up."

"Like a Summer Breeze"

THERE was another fundamental difference between the rectification campaign of spring 1957 and earlier purges. The directive explicitly prohibited the use of coercion. All the classic procedures of earlier cam-

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paigns—accusation meetings, sentences imposed by the assembled public, forced public confessions, etc.—were to be avoided. This campaign was to be conducted by dialogue and persuasion. Nailing it down in a truly Chinese formula, the directive announced that rectification was to be as gentle as a summer breeze.

Had the era of moderation really opened in red China? The moderation itself was not nearly so surprising as it appeared to be, for it was, after all, to be applied not to the masses but to the party: the party was not to apply coercion to itself. Still, was not this criticism of the party by the people a rejection of the old methods, a move towards greater freedom? To answer that one must look more closely at these meetings. Who, when one gets down to it, called them? The party cadres, party members, and friends of the party. And the forums were conducted in a very "orderly" way, without interruptions or disputes.

Was the end of regimentation approaching? To answer that question one has only to enquire how the movement started. As before, nothing moved except on orders from above. All that was required was for Mao to press a button to set the immense machine in motion to direct all Chinese in all the organisations in China in the desired and already strictly-determined direction: criticism by the masses, self-criticism and confession of error by the cadres, correction of mistakes and disciplining of the unreliable.

What an extraordinary performance! The gigantic machinery of socialism, that only yesterday had been turning out censorship and tyranny, was now fabricating discussion and criticism. "If you have anything to say, speak. And if you speak, then tell all." That was the new slogan. The *People's Daily* hinted that it was put out by Mao himself, and added, as a necessary corollary, "If you speak, it will not be held against you."

The first reaction among the Chinese was to keep their mouths shut. They were afraid, and occasionally admitted as much. "We're trembling like crickets in winter," one university professor said. "Won't I be treated as a counter-revolutionary if I speak out?" Remarks like his were to be found in the *People's Daily*, which published them as a reproach to the fearful and an encouragement to the rest. It even gave a good deal of space to those critics who were to be heard. The party leaders in Peking, it seemed, were aware of the need to remove fear, but whether they foresaw the consequences is another question. As when a dyke is breached, a regular flood of criticism was soon to pour over the whole of China.

The Revolt of the Intelligentsia

THE most detailed and impressive criticism was advanced by those who had been made to feel most strongly the stifling climate of the New China—the intellectuals, scientists, teachers, journalists, etc. For the first time they related what they had lived through. Even the Chinese Writers' Union in Peking turned to criticism. The attempt to keep the expression of discontent within prudent limits was in vain; it simply burst out. The writers complained that the Union "directed" them, that they were separated from the Communist party by a barrier of mistrust, that they were divided into categories according to the presumed degree of their loyalty to the régime, and were despised by the very party people who had courted them in the bad old times.

One writer recounted the great difficulties a non-Communist had in getting anything published. Widespread fear, a "climate of pessimism," weighed down on the big professional organisations. "We did not have the courage to come out openly with our opinions." *People's China*, a periodical designed for the foreign reader, published in January the confessions of the prominent writer, Lao Chi, in which he holds up to ridicule "so-called literary works that are filled with political slogans." The Minister for Culture, Mao Tun, admitted that the writers did not regard the Union as "their own": it was an institution to give jobs to government bureaucrats.

Similar forums of scientists offered the

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same picture—the party interfered in everything; it despised the intellectuals; the scientists were controlled by a purely political committee; they were given no satisfactory place within the planning system, etc., etc. The scientists asked for an opportunity to devote themselves to scientific research instead of wasting their time at compulsory political training courses.

For their part, the philosophers directed their fire against the crude method of classification which summarily divided all men and all ideas into the two simple categories of materialist and idealist. They wanted an exception made at least for the classical philosophers.

Finally, the journalists held their meetings, in Peking, Shanghai, and other large cities. They complained of the limitations on their freedom, of having constantly to face the hostility of state officials, and to manœuvre through the web of police restrictions. The deputy editor of the largest Shanghai newspaper attacked those pseudo-journalists, occupying high posts in the profession, who in practice acted as censors and bureaucrats. One of his colleagues accused the régime of raising a wall between Communist and non-Communist papers (there are still five "non-Communist" papers in China). Many journalists seized the opportunity of at last exercising their profession, of presenting the facts as they were.

The Youth and the Workers

DISAFFECTION was not confined to the educated; it prevailed among those sections of the population which had supplied the revolution with its most loyal forces, the workers and the young people.

For the first time since the establishment of the People's Republic, one heard of industrial unrest and strikes in China. Here are a few examples, taken from the Communist press: In Peking the apprentices in a factory producing agricultural machinery rioted; in a machine-tool shop in Tientsin there had been sporadic strikes from the beginning of 1956, systematic absenteeism, and rising discontent; in Chungking the bureaucratic attitude of the cadres had provoked disturbances in a number of factories; in Canton towards the end of the year there were strikes attributed *inter alia* to unfair and inadequate wages and to bureaucracy.

There were no reports of unrest in the countryside as a result of collectivisation, but an occasional fact seeped through the official silence. In April, for instance, there had been peasant risings in Shensi. Reports about discontent among the youth, on the other hand, were abundant. There had been unrest among the students in Harbin, and at the universities of Taiyuan, Tientsin, Chungking, and even Peking. The *Kuangming Daily* published detailed reports (for which it was subsequently reprimanded) about the extremely poor state of discipline and morale among the students of Nanking university, and at high schools in Peking and Shanghai.

The authorities tried to avoid coercion in replying to these grievances—an attitude endorsed by Mao in his speech on "contradictions." The Mayor of Peking openly advised the party cadres not to be frightened of such manifestations and not to let themselves be stampeded into thoughtless reprisals. The trade union chairman, Lai Jo-yu, reproached the unions for their "remoteness from the masses." His deputy referred to a still more disquieting phenomenon—when there were disputes, the workers set up their own organisations outside the unions.

In the middle of May the *People's Daily* prescribed the attitude to be adopted to manifestations of this kind. It can be summarised under three heads: (1) to remedy immediately certain grievances; (2) to explain those that could not be met; (3) to track down those who were responsible for stirring up unrest. The paper advised the Communist cadres to behave "modestly and intelligently."

The higher the wave of criticism rose, the more the hitherto sacrosanct Communist party felt it as a direct attack. The case of Wang Ming is significant. Wang Ming, the hero of a novel by a young writer published in *People's Literature*, was disappointed in Communism. Full of illusions, he had pene-

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100 FLOWERS BLOOM—AND WITHER

'Our Constitution provides that citizens "enjoy freedom of residence and freedom to change residence." In fact, we have not given any of the five hundred million peasants the freedom to change their residence to a city.... Again, our Constitution provides that "freedom of the person of citizens is inviolable." During the campaign for the suppression of counter-revolutionaries in 1955, an untold number of citizens throughout the country were detained.... A great many of them died....

'This is tyranny! This is wickedness!... The articles of the Constitution on human rights have become a sort of window-dressing to deceive the people....

'At different times, the intellectuals may be thrown into the fire or pushed into the water, sent down to hell or lifted up to heaven. Going down to hell, intellectuals have many grievances and regret that, considering themselves wise at the beginning of liberation, they did not listen to their friends' advice to go abroad "to observe conditions there."... Going up to heaven, the intellectuals are frightened because they do not know when "the Emperor will lose his temper" to make them fall. In the last seven years, they have lived like a girl being brought up under her future mother-in-law in the home of her fiancé, constantly trembling with fear....

'Under the domination of fanatical sectarianism, our Party has become disgusted with intellectuals, snubbed them, looked upon them with suspicion and distrust.... We have applied to intellectuals these methods of punishment which peasants would not apply to landlords or workers would not apply to capitalists. The intellectuals who chose to die by jumping from tall buildings, drowning in rivers, swallowing poison, cutting their throats, or by other methods, were innumerable.... Comparing our methods of massacre with that adopted by the Fascists at Auschwitz, the latter appear more clumsy and childish....'

("A Letter to Chairman Mao," by Yang Shih-chan, Professor at the Central-South Institute of Finance and Economics, written on May 17, 1957, and published in *Chang Chiang Jih Pao*, Hankow, on July 13, 1957.)

*

'Not long ago, by the side of Wei Ming Lake [at Peking University], *the political climate was still that of the period of hibernation when the cold had just ended, and the sounds of spring thundering were being indistinctly heard. But within a few days, all the flowers have blossomed overnight....*

'The first critical bulletin appeared on the wall of the Mess Hall on the morning of May 19, followed by another bulletin issued by students of the Department of Philosophy, recommending the development of a garden of democracy to develop the campaign for free debate to assist the rectification movement. The proposal roused enthusiastic response from the students. Bulletin after bulletin was posted. Many people consider that the way has been opened for speaking freely....

'From morning till evening, an endless stream of people surrounded the Mess Hall and the nearby buildings to read the bulletins. Enthusiastic discussions and debates were held near the walls, in the dormitories, in the corridors, or on the meadows by the side of the lake. The atmosphere of free debate at once engulfed the whole university.... On the square in front of the Mess Hall, as in Hyde Park, thousands of students were listening to one heated debate after another....'

("'The Democratic Wall' of Peking University," by Liu Kuang-hua, in *Wen Hui Pao*, Shanghai, May 27, 1957.)

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'...Some rightists, in response to the rightists in our society, launched a mad attack against the Party and socialism.... A senior student of the physics department, T'an T'ien-jung, fired the first shot in his article, "One obnoxious weed." He said that since 1895 Marxism started on its way to "contradict itself"...that the Jen Min Jih Pao [the Party paper] *was a "Great Wall that shuts out the truth." He branded the students who were good in study, work, and health as "idiots."...Some people suggested that "the Party Committee be removed from the throne." T'an T'ien-jung, Liu Ch'i-ti, and other rightists collaborated in organising a reactionary clique, "The Hundred Flowers Society," to spread reactionary assertions, to plot "a democratic movement from below," to "struggle for democracy, freedom, and human rights."... Rightist T'an T'ien-jung could not refrain from trying to sell his reactionary goods in other*

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schools. Under the pretext of introducing the experience of the rectification movement, some of the rightists went to Tientsin to fabricate rumours and to deceive the students. They sent some so-called "relaying batons of democracy" to Futan University, East China Normal University, and other institutions, scheming to fan the flame of hatred towards socialism everywhere.'

("An Open Letter from the Students' Association of Peking University to students of higher institutions throughout the country," New China News Agency, June 27, 1957.)

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'The anti-Party attacks launched by the rightists of Nanking University were specially manifest in the incident in which over thirty students were mobilised to post bulletins in front of the [newspaper] Hsin Hua Jih Pao. *In the bulletins they emphatically queried why* Hsin Hua Jih Pao *did not report the news of the students' "democratic upsurge" in their university. They asked, since the* Wen Hui Pao *reported the "Democratic Wall" of Peking University, why did the* Hsin Hua Jih Pao not *report the democratic wall of Nanking University? They inveighed against and satirised the reporters and the editor of this newspaper....'*

("Rightists in Nanking University run into obstacles," by Chen Wei-min and Shih Yueh-ngo, in *Jen Min Jih Pao*, Peking, July 12, 1957.)

*

'The Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the China Academy of Sciences held a symposium on August 30 and 31 to expose and criticise the activities of the right-wing bourgeoisie against the Communist Party, Socialism, and Marxism.... It was pointed out at the symposium that the right-wing bourgeoisie on the one hand insisted on the restoration of the sociology faculty at the higher educational institutions and, on the other, stubbornly demanded that the study of Marxism at the higher educational institutions be abolished.... Yu Sheng-chuan of the Central Institute of Nationalities revealed that many of Fei Hsiao-tung's writings were the work of others. He said that Fei Hsiao-tung had resorted to tricks to steal and exploit the fruit of labour of other people.'

(New China News Agency, September 3, 1957.)

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'The Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences held a symposium in Peking on September 3, to reveal the anti-Party and anti-Socialist activities of the bourgeois rightists in the field of economics.... In June of this year... rightist Chen Chen-han, professor in the Department of Economics of Peking University... called a meeting attended by Hsu Yu-nan and Lo Chih-ju, professors in the same department, Wu Pao-san, deputy director of the Institute of Economic Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and others, for the purpose of drawing up the so-called "Statement of opinions concerning current work in the field of economics."... This document does its best to slander Marxist-Leninist economics by saying that it is "doctrinaire," that it is already a thing of the past, that it is a worn-out shoe which should have been discarded. The document further negates the achievement of the Marxist economists in the Soviet Union and our country, saying that it is still in its infant stage, hardly a science, but a mere collection of "words" from the Marxist classics, and as such entirely useless. The same document demands concretely the revival of bourgeois economics, especially of the Keynesian economics....'

(New China News Agency, September 3, 1957.)

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"I Admit My Guilt to the People," by Fei Hsiao-tung.

"Request for People's Forgiveness," by Huang Chi-hsiang.

"I Bow My Head and Admit My Guilt before the People," by Chang Po-chun.

"A Review of My Mistakes and Crimes," by Huang Shao-hung.

"Why Have I Committed Such Serious Errors?" by Tan Ti-wu.

(Titles of articles appearing in the *Jen Min Jih Pao*, Peking, on July 14, 1957.)

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'As a result of a reorganisation taking place in the literary journals and organisations of the Chinese Writers' Union, about fifty per cent. of the members will be released for work at the grass roots level. Many Chinese writers have already declared their intention of living and working in factories on the land.'

(A *Pravda* report from Peking, November 20, 1957.)

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trated the inner circles of the party and there discovered the sad truth about the careerism and servility of the party bureaucrats, the cynicism of the leaders, the indifference to the sufferings of the people. After a flood of articles for and against Wang Ming the author, after having performed his self-criticism, was declared by the rulers to be more or less right.

"When in 1949 the party gained a firm foothold in the towns the people welcomed them. To-day party and people are hundreds of miles apart from each other. Communists are looked on as gods—or as devils. The masses live under the control of party people, who behave towards them like police in mufti. But China belongs to its 600 million Chinese and not to the Communists. Your attitude—'we are the state'—is intolerable. The masses could reach the point of killing Communists and overthrowing you. But the end of the party would not be the end of China. We would not be traitors to our country."

These were the words of an instructor at the People's University of Peking at a "criticism forum." Nothing like it had been heard since the Communists took power, at least not in public. The scandal was correspondingly great.

By the end of May the rectification campaign had been going for a month, but it was going badly. Instead of the mildness of a summer breeze, bitterness had crept in. "Ingratitude!" Chou En-lai cried. "Have you forgotten from what chaos we rescued China?" And he was right, at least in part. They are certainly ungrateful to forget the order and the new unity of China, the strength and respect it enjoys, the victory it has won over famine. But man does not live by rice alone. The price that had had to be paid by the spirit, by the personality, by liberty, was high. And in any case the successes achieved are not so brilliant as the Government's propaganda would have us believe. Economic difficulties are increasing, food is scarce, there is not much clothing to be bought. There are queues for everything. Prices are rising, while wages remain frozen at the 1956 level.

Summoned to speak, the Chinese vied with each other in tackling the theme proposed by the Government itself, the "bureaucratisation" of the régime, the entire structure of administrative oppression, and the still worse problem of administrative inefficiency. Inhabitants of Peking complained that government offices emptied their waste bins into the street, that government officials were remote from the public—they accepted no petitions and sometimes resorted to blows. (These items are taken from the official New China News Agency.) The provinces are swamped by bureaucrats; the municipal councils are inflated. Shanghai has 50,000 municipal officials in 70 different offices, three times as many as there were five years ago. In the countryside there is on the average one official for every 200 of the population. In the towns every third worker is in the government service.

Here the attacks, growing more frequent and more bold, reached the very centre, the structure of the state itself. Chen Ti-chiang, an outstanding jurist, declared that elections were wholly fictitious, parliament a sham in which no debate was possible; the government's proposals always received unanimous endorsement. One prominent member of the Club of September 3, to which progressive intellectuals belong, made a still sharper attack on the constitution. It was only a scrap of paper, for many a scrap of toilet paper; in practice all the liberties it granted were violated by the rulers. "Every day countless people are imprisoned. Private correspondence is subject to arbitrary censorship."

At last there was the most disturbing criticism of all, criticism of the foundations of the system, an attack on the all-powerful Chinese Communist Party. The privileged life of party functionaries was held up to reproof. They had servants, and large enough homes to house them. Someone had calculated that they had eight times as much dwelling-space as an ordinary Chinese mortal. Professor Ko Pai-chi had his ques-

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tion: "We are told that the standard of living has risen. But for whom? For people who used to go around in broken shoes and now ride in cars and wear fine clothes—the members and functionaries of the party." Communists were criticised for their aloofness. They had "drawn a deep trench between themselves and the people."

For the first time since the revolution the opponents of the régime approached a really inflammatory question—the measures of suppression. Since Mao had said that the class struggle "as a whole" had been completed, they asked for the account. With every kind of circumlocution they referred to the violence which the party had used to establish itself, and asked compensation for the victims whose innocence had been admitted. One old liberal went so far as to plead for those unfortunates vegetating in prison camps without ever having been sentenced, and asked that no one should be kept longer than one year without a decision as to his fate. At the end of June, Chou En-lai dealt with this question, but the figures he gave were scarcely reassuring. One out of every six "counter-revolutionaries" had been executed, and 40 per cent. of all those arrested had been sent to the camps.

Occasionally party members themselves launched an attack. The Minister for Trade said that "there is no freedom, either in the country or the party." The most damaging criticism came from the non-Communist camp of fellow-travellers, former bourgeois, one-time liberal intellectuals, "patriotic" capitalists (i.e., capitalists who have capitulated), professors from the Mandarin class, etc. All these people, clearly distinguished by their non-proletarian origin, were themselves wide open to attack. Were they not aware of the danger, or had they really great courage? Did they perhaps think that their hour had come, that China might follow, if not Hungary's example, at least Poland's?

However that may be, the discontented overshot the mark. The limits of permitted criticism were transgressed. The measure ran over. The party turned to the counter-offensive.

The Counter-offensive

THE accused, a university professor, stood up in the centre of the gathering, his face pale and his head bent. The meeting, called to accuse him, was held in the auditorium in which he was accustomed to lecture. He made a public confession. "I admit that I harboured unorthodox views, deriving from my bourgeois origin. By wrongly interpreting Chairman Mao's idea of discussion and rectification, I advanced negative criticism in a subjective fashion. . . ."

He was interrupted by cries of indignation; the crowd derided and insulted him. It consisted of his own kind of people—colleagues from other faculties, students, the administrative personnel of the university.

"In private conversation," he continued, "I always emphasised. . . ." Further interruptions. "With whom?" "Tell us the details." "Bourgeois." These were his students and colleagues. As they say in China: "He has been delivered unto his friends."

This was the sad end of the rectification campaign, a relapse into the worst practices of the 1952 and 1955 purges. Now the Communist press reported the new kind of rectification, conducted by the party and its emissaries. With all the over-hasty critics in disgrace, uncertainty and fear spread again; the hunt was on for "deviationists."

It began in Parliament, and was conducted by the deputies themselves. The Minister for the Timber Industry, Lo Lung-chi, and the Minister for Communications, Chang Po-chun, were among the accused. The accusers spoke of a "conspiracy to overthrow the régime." The newspapers referred to an "anti-party alliance" between Chang and Lo: Lo had wished to establish a parliamentary régime of the Western type while Chang had advocated the payment of dividends to the capitalists for another twenty years. With a preliminary flourish of trumpets, Chang, Lo, and other outstanding figures among the accused made a public confession. Did they refuse to defend themselves out of weakness? Or were they only too well aware of their helplessness? In any case they appeared as penitent sinners, following the example of

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other penitents of the second rank who had accused them of crimes in an effort to lessen their own guilt. For the régime demands proof of contrition in the form of denunciations.

The purge is being conducted throughout the whole of China. It is still too early to define its character or estimate its consequences. Nevertheless we can try to formulate clearly the questions it raises and, with the necessary reservations, to answer them.

The first and most important question is this: Was the invitation to free discussion merely a trap? Was the permission, indeed the summons, to criticise, a trick to reveal the opponents of the régime? I do not think so. Since the spring of 1956 we have had a number of statements, decisions, and events which unmistakably show that the leaders wanted some measure of liberalisation, and that Mao himself was acutely aware of the need for a "rectification" of the party. It is possible, and even probable, that towards the end the Communist leaders somewhat extended the freedom to criticise in order the better to watch their most dangerous critics, and to this extent we can speak of a trap. But the original intention was honest; there really was a desire for relaxation.

THE second question is: What was the real extent of the movement against the party? According to the official Peking version, a minority of traitors arose in the midst of an overwhelmingly loyal people; they were liberals and intellectuals of bourgeois origin who, under cover of the united front, drew close to the party, or pretended to do so. Even this optimistic version reveals a fairly serious state of affairs. It implies that the united front was largely a façade, and the much-advertised adherence of the bourgeoisie and the capitalists to Communism nothing but a put-up show, discontinued at the first sign of relaxation.

But this version is in any case refuted by the tremendous scope of the hunt for deviationists, which is now spreading from the towns to the country, although it is unlikely that bourgeois and intellectuals are to be found in the villages of China. Everything that appears in the Communist press suggests that the deviations extend far beyond the small circle of liberals in which they are said to have started. They appear in all strata of the new society. And if the outbreak was not more dangerous, if the Communist party is in full control of the situation and still sure of itself, that is simply because in this society there can be no non-spontaneous demonstrations of the disaffected. For there is no possible way for the discontented to meet or to organise an opposition. There is much to suggest that the campaign against "right deviationists" is primarily an attempt to sound out the situation, for the rulers were taken by surprise; they do not know who are the guilty and what posts they hold, for their numbers cannot be counted.

Is rectification, the true rectification which goes to the root of misdeeds and errors, finally buried? That is the third (if by no means the last) question. The answer seems fairly clear —it depends on the outcome of struggles within the Communist party. The crisis has confirmed what has long been known, that the party is split. There is a right wing, and a "hard," anti-liberal left, which appears anxious to expand the present action into a violent purge. The moderate centre around Mao is putting a brake on the left. Significantly, the *People's Daily* recalls that the original aim still remains—to eliminate all grievances and deficiencies. But has the fiasco of rectification condemned Mao's moderate intentions to failure?

Meanwhile the Chinese have caught on. They now know what the doctrine of a hundred flowers means: a hundred flowers may bloom, but they must all be red.

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Abioseh Nicol

The Truly Married Woman

AJAYI stirred for a while and then sat up. He looked at the cheap alarm clock on the chair by his bedside. It said six-fifteen. It was light outside already and the West African town was slowly waking to life. The night-watchmen roused from sleep by the angry crowing of cockerels were officiously banging the locks of stores and houses to assure themselves and their employers, if near, of their efficiency. The village women were tramping through the streets to the market place with their wares, arguing and gossiping.

Ajayi sipped his cup of morning tea. It was as he liked it, weak and sugary, without milk. With an effort of will, he got up and walked to the window, standing by which he took six deep breaths. This done daily, he firmly believed, would prevent tuberculosis. He walked through his ramshackle compound to an outhouse where he took a quick bath, pouring the water over his head from an empty tin with which he scooped water from a bucket.

By then Ayo had laid out his breakfast. Ayo was his wife. Not really one, he would explain to close friends, but a mistress. A good one. She had borne him three children and was now three months gone with another. They had been together for twelve years. She was a patient, handsome woman. Very dark with very white teeth and open sincere eyes. Her hair was always carefully plaited. When she first came to him—to the exasperation of her parents—he had fully intended marrying her as soon as she had shown satisfactory evidence of fertility, but he had never quite got round to it. In the first year or so she would report in great detail to him the splendour of the marriage celebrations of her friends, looking at him with hopeful eyes. He would close the matter with a tirade on the sinfulness of ostentation. She gave up after some time. Her father never spoke to her again after she had left home. Her mother visited her secretly and attended the baptismal ceremonies of all her children. The Church charged extra for illegitimate children as a deterrent; two dollars instead of fifty cents. Apart from this, there was no other great objection. Occasionally, two or three times a year, the pastor would preach violent sermons against adultery, polygamy, and unmarried couples living together. Ajayi and Ayo were good churchpeople and attended regularly, but sat in different pews. After such occasions, their friends would sympathise with them and other couples in similar positions. There would be a little grumbling and the male members of the congregation would say that the trouble with the Church was that it did not stick to its business of preaching the Gospel, but meddled in people's private lives. Ajayi would indignantly absent himself from Church for a few weeks but would go back eventually because he liked singing hymns and because he knew secretly that the pastor was right.

Ayo was a good mistress. Her father was convinced she could have married a high-school teacher at least, or a pharmacist, but instead she had attached herself to a junior Government clerk. But Ayo loved Ajayi, and

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was happy in her own slow private way. She cooked his meals and bore him children. In what spare time she had she either did a little petty trading, visited friends, or gossiped with Omo, the woman next door.

With his towel round his waist, Ajayi strode back to the bedroom, dried himself and dressed quickly but carefully in his pink tussore suit. He got down the new bottle of patent medicine which one of his friends who worked in a drug store had recommended to him. Ajayi believed that to keep healthy a man must take a dose of some medicine. He read the label of this one. It listed about twenty diseased conditions of widely differing pathology which the contents of the bottle were reputed to cure if the patient persevered in its daily intake. Ajayi underlined in his own mind at least six from which he believed he either suffered or was on the threshold of suffering: dizziness, muscle pain, impotence, fever, jaundice, and paralytic tremors. Intelligence and courage caused him to skip the obviously female maladies and the others like nervous debility or bladder pains. It said on the label too that a teaspoonful should be taken three times a day. But since he only remembered to take it in the morning and in any case believed in shock treatment, he took a swig and two large gulps. The medicine was bitter and astringent. He grimaced but was satisfied. It was obviously a good and strong medicine or else it would not have been so bitter.

He went into breakfast. He soon finished his maize porridge, fried beans, and cocoa. He then severely flogged his eldest son, a ten-year-old boy, for wetting his sleeping-mat last night. Ayo came in after the boy had fled screaming to the backyard.

"Ajayi, you flog that boy too much," she said. "He should stop wetting the floor, he is a big boy," he replied; "in any case, no one is going to instruct me how to bring up my son." "He is mine too," Ayo said. She seldom opposed him unless she felt strongly. "He has not stopped wetting it, although you beat him every time he does. In fact, he is doing it more and more now. Perhaps if you stopped whipping him he might get better." "Did I whip him to begin doing it?" Ajayi asked. "No." "Well, how will stopping whipping him stop him doing it?" Ajayi asked triumphantly. "Nevertheless," Ayo said, "our own countrywoman Bimbola, who has just come back from England and America studying nursing, told us in a women's group meeting that it was wrong to punish children for such things." "All right, I'll see," he said, reaching for his sun-helmet.

All that day at the office he thought about this and other matters. So Ayo had been attending women's meetings. Well, what do you know. She would be running for the Town Council next. The sly woman. Always looking so quiet and meek and then quoting modern theories from overseas doctors at him. He smiled with pride. Indeed Ayo was an asset. Perhaps it was wrong to beat the boy. He decided he would not do so again.

Towards closing-time the chief clerk sent for him. Wondering what mistake he had made that day, or on what mission he was to be sent, he hurried along to the forward office. There were three white men sitting on chairs by the chief clerk, who was an ageing African dressed with severe respectability. On seeing them, Ajayi's heart started thudding. The police, he thought; heavens, what have I done?

"Mr. Ajayi, these gentlemen have inquired for you," the chief clerk said formally. "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Ajayi," the tallest said, with a smile. "We represent the World Gospel Crusading Alliance from Alabama. My name is Jonathan Olsen." Ajayi shook hands and the other two were introduced.

"You expressed an interest in our work a year ago and we have not forgotten. We are on our way to South Africa and we thought we would look you up personally."

It transpired that the three Crusaders were *en route* and that their ship had stopped for refuelling off the West African port for a few hours. The chief clerk looked at Ajayi with new respect. Ajayi tried desperately to remember any connection with W.G.C.A.

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(as Olsen had by then proceeded to call it) whilst he made conversation with them a little haltingly. Then suddenly he remembered. Some time ago he had got hold of a magazine from the sub-tenant at the U.S. Information Service. He had cut a coupon from it and posted it to W.G.C.A. asking for information, but really hoping they would send illustrated Bibles free which he might give away or sell. He hoped for at least large reproductions of religious paintings which, suitably framed, would decorate his parlour or which he might paste up on his bedroom wall. But nothing had come of it and he had forgotten. Now here was W.G.C.A. as large as life. Three lives. Instantly and recklessly he invited all three and the chief clerk to come to his house for a cold drink. They all agreed.

"Mine is a humble abode," he warned them. "No abode is humble that is illumined by Christian love," Olsen replied. "His is illumined all right, I can assure you," the chief clerk remarked dryly.

Olsen suggested a taxi, but Ajayi neatly blocked that by saying the roads were bad. He had hurriedly whispered to a fellow clerk to rush home on a bicycle and tell Ayo he was coming in half an hour with white men and that she should clean up and get fruit drinks. Ayo was puzzled by the message as she firmly imagined all white men drank only whisky and iced beer. But the messenger had said that there was a mixture of friendliness and piety in the visitors' mien, which made him suspect they might be missionaries. Another confirmatory point was that they were walking instead of being in a car. That cleared up the anomaly in Ayo's mind and she set to work at once. Oju, now recovered from his morning disgrace, was dispatched with a basket on his head to buy soft drinks. Ayo whisked off the wall all the commercial calendars with suggestive pictures. She propped up family photographs which had fallen face downwards on the table. She removed the Wild West novels and romance magazines from the parlour and put instead an old copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and a Latin grammar which she believed would add culture and religious force to the decorations. She remembered the wine glasses and the beer-advertising table-mats in time and put those under the sofa. She just had time to change to her Sunday frock and borrow a wedding ring from her neighbour when Ajayi and the guests arrived. The chief clerk was rather surprised at the changes in the room—which he had visited before—and in Ayo's dress and ring. But he concealed his feelings. Ayo was introduced and made a little conversation in English. This pleased Ajayi a great deal. The children had been changed too into Sunday suits, faces washed and hair brushed. Olsen was delighted and insisted on taking photographs for the Crusade journal. Ayo served drinks and then modestly retired, leaving the men to discuss serious matters. Olsen by then was talking earnestly on the imminence of Christ's Second Coming and offering Ajayi ordination into deaconship.

The visit passed off well and soon the missionaries left to catch their boat. Ajayi had been saved from holy orders by the chief clerk's kindly explanation that it was strictly against Government regulations for civil servants to indulge in non-official organisations. To help Ajayi out of his quandary, he had even gone further and said that contravention might result in a fine or imprisonment. "Talk about colonial oppression," the youngest of the missionaries had gloomily said.

The next day Ajayi called at the chief clerk's office with a carefully wrapped bottle of beer as a present for his help generally on the occasion. They discussed happily the friendliness and interest the white men had shown.

THIS incident and Ayo's protest against flagellation as a specific against enuresis made Ajayi very thoughtful for a week. He decided to marry Ayo. Another consideration which added weight to the thought was the snapshot Olsen took for his magazine. In some peculiar way Ajayi felt he and Ayo should marry, as millions of Americans would see their picture—Olsen had assured

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him of this—as "one saved and happy African family." He announced his intention of marrying her to Ayo one evening, after a particularly good meal and a satisfactory bout of belching. Ayo at once became extremely solicitous and got up looking at him with some anxiety. Was he ill? she asked; was there anything wrong at the office? Had anyone insulted him? No, he answered, there was nothing wrong with his wanting to get married, was there? Or had she anyone else in mind? Ayo laughed. "As you will," she said; "let us get married, but do not say I forced you into it."

They discussed the wedding that night. Ajayi wanted to have a white wedding with veil and orange blossom. But Ayo with regret decided it would not be quite right. They agreed on grey, Ayo particularly wanted a corset to strap down her obvious bulge, Ajayi gave way gallantly to this feminine whim, chucking her under the chin and saying, "You women with your vanity!" But he was firm about no honeymoon. He said he could not afford the expense and that one bed was as good as another. Ayo gave way on that. They agreed, however, on a Church wedding and that their children could act as bridal pages to keep the cost of clothes within the family.

That evening Ajayi, inflamed by the idea and arrangements for the wedding, pulled Ayo excitedly to him as they lay in bed. "No," said Ayo, shyly, pushing him back gently, "you mustn't. Wait until after the marriage." "Why?" said Ajayi, rather surprised but obedient. "Because it will not somehow be right," Ayo replied, seriously and determinedly.

Ayo's father unbent somewhat when he heard of the proposed marriage. He insisted, however, that Ayo moved herself and all her possessions back home to his house. The children were sent to Ayo's married sister. Most of Ajayi's family were in favour of the union, except his sister, who, moved by the threat implicit in Ayo's improved social position, had advised Ajayi to see a soothsayer first. As Ayo had got wind of this through friends met at market on Saturday, she saw the soothsayer first and fixed things. When Ajayi and his sister called at night to see him, he had, after consulting the oracles, pronounced future happiness, avoiding the sister's eye. The latter had restrained herself from scratching the old man's face and had accepted defeat.

The only other flaw in a felicitous situation had been Ayo's neighbour Omo, who had always on urgent occasions at short notice loaned Ayo her wedding ring. She had suddenly turned cold. Especially after Ayo had shown her the wedding presents Ajayi intended to give her. The neighbour had handled the flimsy nylon articles with a mixture of envy and rage.

"Do you mean you are going to wear these?" she had asked. "Yes," Ayo had replied simply. "But, my sister," she had protested, "you will catch cold with these. Suppose you had an accident and all them doctors lifted your clothes in hospital. They will see everything through these." "I never have accidents," Ayo answered, and added, "Ajayi says all the 'Ollywood cinema women wear these. It says so there. Look—'Trademark Hollywood.'" "These are disgraceful; they hide nothing, it is extremely fast of you to wear them," the jealous girl said, pushing them back furiously over the fence to Ayo.

"Why should I want to hide anything from my husband when we are married?" Ayo said triumphantly, moving back to her own kitchen, safe in future against the patronising way the wedding ring had always been lent her.

THE arrangements had to be made swiftly, since time and the corset ribs were both against them, and Ajayi's domestic routine was sorely tried, especially his morning cup of tea which he missed. He borrowed heavily from a moneylender to pay the bride price and for the music, dancing, and feasting, and for dresses of the same pattern which Ayo and her female relations would wear on the wedding day after the ceremony. The engagement took place quietly, his relations taking a Bible and a ring to Ayo's father and asking for her hand in marriage. Ajayi's

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uncle and other relations went to Ayo's family house the day before the wedding. They took with them two small girls carrying on their heads large hollow gourds. These contained articles like pins, farthings, fruit, kola nuts, and cloth. The articles were symbolic gifts to the bride from the bridegroom, so that she might be precluded in future marital disputes from saying, "Not a pin, or not a farthing, etc. has the blackguard given me since we married."

On arrival at Ayo's father's house, the small procession passed it first as if uncertain, then returned to it. This gave warning to the occupants. Ajayi's uncle knocked several times. Voices from within shouted back and ordered him to name himself, his ancestry, and his mission. He did these. Argument and some abuse followed on either side. After his family credentials had been seriously examined, questioned, doubted, and disparaged, Ajayi's uncle started wheedling and cajoling. This went on for about half an hour to the enjoyment and mock trepidation of Ajayi's relations. He himself was at home, waiting. Finally, Ayo's father opened the door. Honour was satisfied and it was now supposed to be clearly evident to Ajayi's relations, in case it had not been before, that they were entering a family and household distinguished, difficult, and jealous of their distinction. Drinks were served and prayers offered. The gifts were accepted and others exchanged. Conversation went on for about thirty minutes on every conceivable subject but the one at hand. All through this, Ayo and her sisters and some young female relations were kept hidden in an adjoining bedroom. Finally with some delicacy Ajayi's uncle broached the subject after Ayo's father had given him an opening by asking what, apart from the honour of being entertained by himself and his family, did Ajayi's relations seek. They had heard, the latter replied, that in this very household there was a maiden chaste, beautiful, and obedient, known to all by the name of Ayo. This maiden they sought as wife for their kinsman Ajayi. Ayo's father opened the bedroom door and brought forth Ayo's sister. Was this the one? he asked, testing them. They examined her. No, it is not this one, they replied, this one is too short to be her. Then a cousin was brought out. Was this she? No, this one is too fat, the applicants said. About ten women in all were brought out. But none was the correct one. Each was too short or too fat or too fair, as the case was, to suit the description of the maiden sought for. At this point Ajayi's uncle slapped his thigh, as if to show his doubts were confirmed, and turning to his party stated that it was a good thing they had insisted on seeing for themselves the bride asked for, or else the wrong woman would have been foisted on them. They agreed, nodding. All right, all right, Ayo's father replied, there was no cause for impatience. He wanted to be sure they knew whom they wanted. Standing on guard at the bedroom door, he turned his back to the assembly, and with tears in his eyes beckoned to Ayo sitting on the bed inside. He kissed her lightly on the forehead to forgive the past years. Then he led her forth and turned fiercely to the audience. Was this then the girl they wanted, he asked them sternly.

"This *is* the very one," Ajayi's uncle replied with joy. "Hip, hip, hip, hooray," everybody shouted, encircling Ayo and waving white handkerchiefs over her head. The musicians smote their guitars instantly; someone beat an empty wine bottle rhythmically with a corkscrew; after a few preliminary trills the flutes rose high in melody; all danced round Ayo. And as she stood in the centre, a woman in her mid-thirties, her hair slightly streaked grey, undergoing a ceremony of honour she had often witnessed and long put outside her fate, remembering the classic description of chastity, obedience, and beauty, she wept with joy and the unborn child stirred within her for the first time.

THE next morning she was bathed by an elderly respected female member of her family and her mother helped her to dress. Her father gave her away at the marriage service at Church. It was a quiet wedding with only sixty or so guests. Ajayi looked quite *distingué* in dinner jacket

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and buttonhole, which he wore only on special occasions. Afterwards they went to Ayo's family home for the wedding luncheon. At the door they were met by another of Ayo's numerous elderly aunts, who held a glass of water to their lips for them to sip in turn, Ajayi first. The guests were all crowded outside behind the couple. The aunt made a conveniently long speech until all the guests had foregathered. She warned Ayo not to be too friendly with other women as they would inevitably steal her husband. That they should live peaceably and not let the sun go down on a quarrel between them. Turning to Ajayi, she told him with a twinkle in her eyes that a wife could be quite as exciting as a mistress, and not to use physical violence against their daughter, his wife.

After this they entered and the Western part of the ceremony took place. The wedding cake (which Ayo had made) was cut and speeches made. Then Ajayi departed to his own family home where other celebrations went on. Later he changed into a lounge suit and called for Ayo. There was weeping in Ayo's household as if she were setting off on a long journey. Her mother in saying goodbye remarked between tears that although she would not have the honour next morning of showing the world evidence of Ayo's virginity, yet in the true feminine powers of procreation none except the blind could say Ayo had lacked zeal.

They called on various relations on both sides of the family and at last they were home. Ayo seemed different in Ajayi's eyes. He had never really looked at her carefully before. Now he observed her head held erectly and gracefully through years of balancing loads on it in childhood; her statuesque neck with its three natural horizontal ridges—signs of beauty; her handsome shoulders. He clasped her with a new tenderness.

The next morning, as his alarm clock went off, he stirred and reached for his morning cup of tea. It was not there. He sprang up and looked. Nothing. He listened for Ayo's footsteps outside in the kitchen. Nothing. He turned to look beside him. Ayo was there and her bare ebony back was heaving gently. She must be ill, he thought; all that excitement yesterday.

"Ayo, Ayo," he cried, "are you ill?" She turned round slowly, still lying down; and faced him. She tweaked her toes luxuriously under the cotton coverlet and patted her breast slowly. There was a terrible calm about her. "No, Ajayi," she replied, "are you?" she asked him; "are your legs paralysed?" she continued. "No," he said. He was puzzled and alarmed, thinking that her mind had become unhinged under the strain.

"Ajayi, my husband," she said, "for twelve years I have got up every morning at five to make tea for you and breakfast. Now I am a truly married woman you must treat me with a little more respect. You are now a husband and not a lover. Get up and make yourself a cup of tea."

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POETRY

Burns Singer

Ground Plan for a Church

FAÇADES come later. The designer uses
The first rib that Adam ever had
And carves it with exactly the same instrument
As once carved chaos.

To keep at it, to keep at it, that's the trick;
To forget about crockets, bosses, quadripartite vaults,
Limiting delineation to nave, choir and transepts
And simple arithmetic.

To keep infinity out and the exciting gradients
Elevations presume when they're not measured in
Terms of underlying ditches, ruts if you like,
The human medians.

A church is built to contain people,
A population container: and yet it is meant to be
One place at one time,
Time's staple.

You too are aware that every man lives
In a different place from every other
And is surrounded by different patterns of time,
Disparate ogives,

And that a coincidence in the desultory
Movement of legs and backsides can never
Range two men side by side
In the consistory.

So it becomes necessary to devise a space
That will condense their movements to one time only,
Not conflicting areas of experience, no, not above all
The human race.

The species is definable, zoologically delimited
And reasonably distinct:
But the reason itself arranges the very partitions
That must be assimilated.

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The reason itself is an historical asset
Conditioned by its own transcriptions of the evidence.
This church must be built of a sort of stone that will contradict history
Or, better, by-pass it.

Old stones, if they are hard, are best for this. They have
Brought their origin forward to the point where
Change is unlikely, so that their history
Must behave.

And ground too should be carefully chosen
So that it is always pitched plumb centre on the horizon
Where sunset and sundown, for different men,
Mix in one orison.

Each shrug of the earth must be synchronised
At the level of the foundations.
But there must be no Euclidean lines on the drawing board,
Nothing idealised.

Each detail matured slowly like good wine,
An immediate exactitude in the general proportions,
Numerals as part of the æsthetic evidence, all drawn
Into complete design.

For this house is meant as man's guest house for God
As creation is God's for man.
It is needed because the human animal cannot
Be understood

Except, perhaps, when a long reconciliation
Between him and his God is broken by
Immediate quotidian proximity
And the resultant retaliation

Of God through the knowledge of sin that His presence brings
Against sins forever forgotten:
So that man knows the sin of his knowledge and sings
In praise and terror of such things.

It is necessary, therefore, that the building should not interpret.
It should simply be of such dimensions as will contain
Men
And God should be able to sleep quietly in the transept.

Perhaps, after all, the Mosaic Tabernacle,
Its nomadic agility substantiating an ubiquitous God,
Brought time to a standstill and, since then,
All has been architect's prattle.

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Certainly the Heavenly Examiners
Have given few signs of being satisfied by
The various foundations laid down by our designers
And raised to the sky.

Perhaps, of course, we have been too modest.
Perhaps we have not believed with enough fervour
That, however badly our building was conceived,
It was still our best.

We laid our plans too low.
We did not understand
That everything we do
Is always true.

In the end our church cannot stand too high.
Once drawn, the thin boundaries may be steepled
Up to whatever pinnacles our engineers can warrant
As strict possibility.

Vincent Buckley — Reading to my Sick Daughter

WINTER drains and spills. Its mark
Slides on the straining chestnut-tree
Where, lout of his dozen hens, the cock
Treads his circle of vanity

And does not smell the gathering rain.
Here is our pregnant world. But, ill
Pursed face above the counterpane,
You concentrate your febrile will:

"Well, make a poem." Yes, the flame
Is in me, but not the flame of sense.
This pain that sears and finds no name
Is fear, this pity impotence.

So I am silent, feeling the song
Build elsewhere its bright commonweal,
And do not dare to gaze too long
On all the proud detail I would heal:

Small chapped face and hands; the rise
Of nostrils to the soothe of air;
The long slant of judging eyes,
And the improvident fall of hair;

These are what burn my lungs, and raze
The building words. Then huddle down,
You ask too much. In that blue gaze
I'm saviour, songman, epic clown,

For whom words are the sudden wand
That lightens the tree, banishes rain:
Adam ybounden in his bond.
A blast discovers the windowpane.

I give to you, not my own light
But the deep flame of posterity,
And hope some other hand may write
The songs that are lately dead in me.

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Diana Witherby — To a Poet

The mad marshalling of a hundred golden threads
Connected his dark heart with the far
Pear trees in romantic worlds.
A great chessboard of the wildest roving squares
Assembled his mind's pieces and swooped
Sky castles down to mate his kings.
The rain and sea broke through his eyes, his wrist
Was scorched where he had touched the sun,
And when he stumbled on a corner stair
Out of a house where love had reached its end,
He still could feel his feet on the hot hill,
The turf and tiny flowers where that same love began.
Though a fear waited for him sometimes like a bear,
Gigantic, with low claws, near a cave,
He challenged it with words and won.
And words moved when he was free again, they flew
Out of the rose-deep thickets and ranged
Rock edges in the spiralled wind—
Until he joined the night that covered all he saw.

Oh, loaded night that gives us questions without answers,
Beyond the gliding islands of the petalled scent,
How can we distinguish your enormous wall
From your infinity? But stronger than an answer,
His words—the words he left us—fall,
Fall through our minds like shooting stars
And leave us gazing, where they came and went.

Michael Hamburger — An Unnecessary Visit

How I came to the place, I don't remember.
Like one on a pubcrawl in a foreign city,
Guided by those who know.

Suddenly I was there, deserted by all my guides,
Flung from a river-drifting drunkenness
Into those crowded confines, cruelly bright;
Sealed off from the city's flux and her stillness
As never in workshop, night-club or basement room
Concert hall, prison or crypt.

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Puzzled at first, seeing my look of pity,
They stared in silence: "Who might this tourist be?
Angelic emissary? No. Nor simple spy.
One from the lukewarm regions rather, sent
By learned institute or university
To note our habits, tabulate our torment . . .
Out of his depth, has veiled his arrogant eye."

So now they brawled and bawled, half-deafened me,
Played leapfrog, squeezed and scratched their sores,
Fencing with red-hot pokers, scored by the scars
Their foils probed open, shrieked out the other's gain.
But at a sign from one lean inmate ceased,
Rigid as he approached me:
"Well, I'm blessed!
A temperate type dropped in on us," he hissed,
"What's more, an anthropologist!—
No, don't deny it. Why, we're flattered.
A warm, a rousing welcome, you'll admit.
And drop your bedside manner. We've no use for it.
No need to look pained. No need to look depressed.
A bit of a rough-house, eh? As if it mattered.
'Inhuman,' did you mumble? Of all the rot!—
Enlighten the stranger. Tell him the answer,
In chorus they responded: "We like noise"
And then, *fortissimo*, "We like it hot!"

As if to prove their freedom, unprompted they dispersed,
Each to his fire and intricate equipment.
A chemistry class, I thought, but saw no master;
And thought of cows come to the milking shed,
But missed the whacks and shouts.
Watching their work
I moved around till nausea made me pause
Near one who held his left hand in the fire
And with the test-tube in his right hand scraped
The sizzling flesh away.
"Ah yes, we burn,"
He answered when I questioned him, his glance,
Intent but calm, never once raised towards mine,
"With a hard gemlike flame. And in that urn—
No, not the refuse bin for trash the fire disdains,
That urn of pure white alabaster—place
The pure white ash, all that remains
After the ultimate metamorphosis
Of gross corporeal matter. This—
At once the end and product of my pains—
A messenger whose origin and identity
We lack the means to trace
Daily collects and, so I trust, delivers
Where the white lilies grow that feed on it.

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Sir, when you leave us, forget the coarse demeanour
By which the unsociable communicate,
Their play uproarious because their work is silent,
Their language lewd because their thought is rare.
Write of the lilies only—so white, so pure,
Our gaze could not endure them, who at best
Serve to enrich the soil of a garden for ever walled."

Even while he spoke I saw his neighbour creep
Up to the pure white urn and shake its contents
Into a dust-pan, which in turn he emptied
Into the refuse bin.

Memory choked my protest.
"Thank you," I gasped, "thank you for every word.
I shall recall your candour and your trust
When in my mind the bloody wounds are blurred,
The din's an echo and even compassion numb."
Then, longing for empty streets, I hurried out.

By twos and threes I climbed the dingy stairs,
Flung open the front door and
there,
A fond and faithful moll faithfully waiting
Yet again at the prison gate,
Stood she who by the laughter smouldering in her eyes
Keeps lit the hellfire of my own undoing.

W. S. Graham — Letter X—My dear so many times

My dear so many times
My dear, more than this is
Is nothing to the high
Silences unhailed
That surge around us all
Ways wearing us away.
It is easily said
You lie somewhere there
Elegantly under
Unrehearsed possibilities
Of language turning and
Turning with the slow
Drift of the stellar stour.
Yet I turn a little
Towards where you may be
My dear, seeing the started
Poem grow bolder out
Of the corner of my eye.
And this becomes almost
A place where those two
We loved as once stand
On either side of language
To watch. And so even
That is something if nothing
More than making from
The behaviour of silence
Maybe the slow gathering
Way at night over
The unhailed water held
Still for a moment within
These words becoming
Our obstacle in common.

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Denis de Rougemont

Man *v.* Technics?

THE FIRST flight across the Atlantic, by Lindbergh, thrilled the world. It gave us a hero, in a flimsy machine: hence his fame. The first flight across the Atlantic by a pilotless bomber, twenty-five years later, afforded a spectacular demonstration of a sovereign extension of man's powers over matter and nature. It passed almost unnoticed. What did it change in the living habits of nations or individuals? *So little as to be nothing.* It is easy to see that the introduction of the plough among the Mayas would have altered their civilisation, perhaps prevented their exodus to Yucatan, and revolutionised their whole social system. But our technical conquests do not appear to have so radically upset our ways of life, our manners, and the continuity of our national characters. The question then arises: has not the thinking West formed the habit for the last fifty years of exaggerating, without measurement or verification, the importance and danger of technics, and of their effects on the human person? These diatribes repeated a hundredfold against "the enslavement of man by the machine"—do they not seem to betray a greater alarm over man's intoxicating freedom than over the limitations which the machine may be inflicting upon him?

There has been a prolonged cry of anguish at the spectacle of the modern world delivered over to the inexorable laws of the machine. All the thinkers of the century, with a gloomy passion, have one after another, following Tolstoy, given utterance to it; and every periodical and newspaper has amplified and broadcast it—thanks to the machines they were able to use. The Depersonalisation of Man is denounced, and mass-production is blamed for it. The reign of the robot is prophesied. It is now even common to go to the extreme of opposing the H-bomb to the idea of progress and even to scientific research as a whole. It is like cursing electricity on account of the electric chair, but no matter: the cause is noble and the anxiety betrayed is genuine and popular.

Within this universally popular campaign, one can distinguish two themes.

Protests are made in the name of spirit, or mind, against the impersonal forces which repudiate man and his dignity, and which threaten to sterilise his most human faculties —judgment, choice, fantasy, need of the unexpected, serenity, leisure, self-control, individuality, and freedom.

Protests are put out in the name of Nature, of the majestic movement of the seasons and contact with the earth, against a world which grows artificial and ugly, uniform and abstract, breathless and time-tabled, cut off from the natural cycles and the poetry of the *Georgics*.

Or perhaps the two themes are orchestrated and spirituality is joined with naturalism in an unexpected but lyrical alliance.

Before analysing these two themes, one general remark is called for. Although nearly unanimous among our intellectuals and their public, this reaction remains powerless. It has sometimes deprived scientists of subsidies, but it has not seriously hindered the march of technical enquiry and research. "The invasion of our lives by machines" is slowed

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by the price of machinery, not by the complaints of literary men. Workmen have long since given up smashing machines, and the middle classes were always careful not to. As for those who have decided to walk out of the world and weave their own clothes, etc., nothing lasting has emerged from their small communities living in retreat. Nevertheless, the posture of impotent revolt against the way of the modern world, if it fails to change the world, does modify those who assume it. It does increase the sense of insecurity, and sometimes the vogue of pessimism, among the general public, and in that way it contributes to sustaining that "crisis" which is the favourite topic of our best minds.

And yet: even though it remains powerless, even though it is content on the whole with pathetic but fallacious arguments—nonetheless this anxiety about the machine age, the Age of the Bomb, is indicative of our Western situation. What has to be ascertained is whether it signifies a dead-end or mere growing pains, the failure of the Western venture or the stresses of a new hazard.

I. Pre-History

THE PRE-HISTORY of technics goes from the beginnings of mankind down to the end of the 18th century. Till then, and in this respect, East and West hardly differ. Chinese junks were better than the caravels of Columbus. Hindu architecture was never inferior to ours. The craft industries—textiles, paper, and printing—which lagged behind in Europe till the Renaissance, did not forge ahead of those of Asia to any extent until machines were invented. It was about 1800 that they underwent a sudden transformation.

But let us go back to the palæolithic age. Why did men fashion tools? There are as many answers to the question as there are views of man. One is that man was only impelled by the desire to improve his lot or to amass more food and wealth: this "economic" or utilitarian theory assumes a type of man little met with, or not met with at all, until the 19th century—the type of man who has written our school text-books and never invented anything.* Finally, from Nietzsche to Spengler, we have been shown a kind of "man of prey" who hurled himself at Nature in order to subjugate her to his "will to power." Prometheus has been appealed to, the sole figure that could serve to illustrate this tragical theory, which reflected the taste of the age far more than the reality. Did primitive man—who still survives inside each of us—ever think of mastering Nature? As we look back at him, he appears rather to be submerged in her and to be part of her. How could she have threatened "the free development of his personality?" No doubt she compelled him to work very hard, in our Western climate, in order to get food and protect himself from cold, floods, and drought. Nature might well kill him; but from her he drew his life.

What seems clear—or should seem clear—is that primitive man did not attack a Nature whose intentions were far from being consistently malevolent; he aimed to bargain with her so as to cope with demons. The way to come to terms with the fire god—who appeared at two points on the planet, in the Caucasus and in China—was first to commune with him in order to appease and propitiate him: he was given a lump of the same meat that the suppliants ate (whence the invention of cooked food?). With that, the god was committed, having shared the same ritual meal with men. We should feel in this, not so much a "will to power"—which would be a conception of man's strength unimaginable at that stage—but a need *to play*, in the strong sense of the verb, which is a religious sense. Civilisation appeared simultaneously with tools, weapons, and pots, clothing and houses, all things a little stronger or more solid than man, and which enabled him to play his hand by making up for the weaknesses which are his mark. But the usefulness of these articles in no way exhausted the in-

* An examination of the circumstances in which great inventions occurred down to our day shows that the attraction of wealth and well-being has hardly ever operated. This changed in the 20th century with the setting up of research laboratories in the service of the large industries.

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tention which created them, and even, most frequently, did not take account of it. Everything was magic to begin with, everything was dialogue with the natural forces which had to be won over even while they were being obeyed. Whence the lack of adaptation which our rational mind thinks it discovers in what it erroneously mistakes for "technics" among ancient peoples.

THE history of inventions is not that of the needs which may have existed before them. Its logic is not that of utility, but of play.* Now to speak of "play" is to mean "set rules." What had to be kept up, with jealous care, was the system of sacred conventions between man and natural forces. What men feared was not the laws of nature but, on the contrary, the *unexpectedness* of phenomena. Far from there having been any effort to escape from those laws, the hope was that sun and rain, the powers which made the earth fruitful, were going "to go on playing the game," according to the rules. Thus mankind, in its religious rites, "played" with the natural order, so that this order could be perpetuated. Notions of magic, myth, and liturgy, the alchemical ideal and the active pantheism of the Renaissance, and religious motives in general, all seem to have been far more fruitful than motives of utility and power in explaining the real aim of the enormous majority of inventions down to our own period.

Man created tools because he played a game with the demons lurking in fire or stone, in running water or in an animal, and later with the demons peopling his dreams or waking fancies. The dream of flying is what produced the aeroplane; and the dream of setting out at haphazard along the open road, the motor-car. See Henry Ford's autobiography: Ford was an incurable dreamer, a jack-of-all trades without either culture or genius, who wanted to build a "road engine" which would not have to obey the rigid rules of the railway track and its time-tables, but could go off at random—a typical adolescent dream. It met with fulfilment in 1893, a few years after the German, Otto, had invented the internal combustion engine.

A history of the inventions which did not come off, or were not "made use of" (as we suppose), would lead to the same conclusion. Why did the Mayas not plough their soil? Why did the Aztecs use a wheel only to make toys? And why was gold purely ornamental among so many peoples? Owing to their magic, to their differing dreams, to the particular rules of the game they played with Nature.

ONCE the nexus of rites, codified beliefs, and instruments of a dawning civilisation enabled man to put a kind of distance between Nature and his life, the human mind conceived of a Good separate from Nature, and which Nature alone seemed to put out of reach. The human mind came to conceive perfect virtue and perfect health, power, assured abundance, freedom to go far, or, on the contrary, freedom to stay put in spite of natural changes, the ability to fulfil one's dreams, to fly, to escape the seasons (paradise pictured as eternal spring), to bring the body into subjection, not to die.... What opposed and resisted this Good were the servitudes of Nature, the animal necessity to kill in order to survive, disease, tyrannical instincts, death. Soon the more spiritually-minded among men were to think of God as akin to their Good: He was just, perfect, and immortal; his omnipotence was only thwarted by the demoniacal principle, which had now become assimilated to Nature. The God of Good could not be the author of Evil. Nature must therefore be the work of Another. This will be recognised as the Manichæan attitude which has invariably accompanied the ascent of *Good God* religions, and which have surreptitiously set up against them a "purified idealism," which is, in fact, a dualism. For man was henceforth pictured as a soul inside a body. He would never be free and never be

* The 18th-century automatic robots were toys—pure play. They were nevertheless the ancestors of our factory robots, which are indispensable for manipulating radioactive substances, for example. In turn, the discovery of radioactivity corresponded with no utilitarian need, but has created many needs that have become "vital."

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really good unless he could escape from the flesh, from matter, and from natural life, the dominion and creation of the Evil Demiurge. When asceticism, monachism, and angelism, in which matter, flesh, and Nature are despised, and which could but lead to the condemnation and renunciation of every kind of inventive effort.

Upon this same Nature—henceforth the subject of hostility by the "pure"—less spiritually-minded men were able freely to exercise their arts and guile. They made use of Nature as a soulless thing, a thing which they had to find how to use. This latter attitude, a repercussion of the former, was to be of service to modern technics by removing many of the scruples felt by its agents and users.

II. History

LET us now come down to the present century. Nature, now that every kind of magic has been expelled from it, is being domesticated by technics, and domesticated for the first time in history. Already man commands the means of subduing several aspects of Nature's "inhumanity." He is still far from having completed this subjugation, but he is already entitled to consider the completing of it as something attainable.

On the other hand, we discover that we are the very first contemporaries of the machine. Invented in the last century, the machine did not notably affect the daily life of the greatest number till the First World War. An infinitely small portion of human beings had up to then travelled by train, for example, and all trains from 1830 to 1900 doubtless carried fewer passengers than aircraft now do in a single year. The motor-car, the aeroplane, the subway, agricultural and household machines, domestic electricity, the telephone, and the wireless, made their entry into our lives only during the first third of this century.

Such are certainly the facts—generally speaking. But it would be wrong to believe that the peoples of the West ever sought or wanted what they are now getting as their due. What in general do men in the West want? Health, higher pay, better protection against the unforeseen, to travel a little, to be unhampered in enjoying their own little hobby or eccentricity—and not "to subdue Nature!" To meet such modest desires, here are the incredible gifts of technics. Some of these fulfil our secret yearnings, but many of them correspond to nothing. Technics, having proffered them, has to get them taken up and to create a mass need of them. On the basis of these toys for grown-ups, serious and scientific economists have gone on to erect their systems of "laws," which claim "to satisfy" needs that nobody has in the least experienced. The motor-car was not invented because men needed it; but the other way about: men have needed it because it was invented. *Its origin as a phantasm* (in the strict psycho-analytic sense) *is forgotten.*

Whence, then, have we got technics, if not in response to our material and utilitarian needs, which came into being only afterwards? The problem amounts to ascertaining how and why technics suddenly took on impetus at a particular moment of Western civilisation.

IT WOULD be vain to try to find the whys and wherefores of the inventive passion, which is of a poetic order (in the Greek sense of the term), and characteristic of men in general. But something unique occurred in Europe at the beginning of our technical age; science, at last set up on an autonomous and exact basis, encountered the alchemist's dream which, having been driven by chemistry out of the domain of pure research, was turning to practical applications. And this in a social and political climate which had turned very favourable to the brutal undertakings of those who were dubbed "captains of industry." There were thus three forces, two of them creative, and the last instrumental.

Mathematics, physics, and chemistry supplied the base of the major inventions of technics. But they did not of themselves organically lead to these inventions. To pass from the desire for disinterested knowledge to the idea of applying some of its results, men other than the best scientists were

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needed; and also there had to be some other *aim* than that which directed the work of the scientists. We now know that what the alchemists wanted to do was not to make gold in order to enrich themselves, but to effect a great work of transfiguration of matter by man—man in his rôle of demiurge delegated by God.* And this connection between alchemists and chemists seems even less important from the standpoint of technics, than the relation of alchemists to the German pietists, and of the latter to the founders of numerous modern industries. Leonhard Euler, a pietist of Basle, was not only the greatest mathematician of his century, but also the inventor of the turbine.

The desire for transformative knowledge and the desire for contemplative knowledge are the two sources of technical advance, and they coalesce in the great myth of the modern age. The hero of Goethe's *Faust* is first of all an alchemist but he ends his human venture (conditioned by the three dominant notes of pure knowing, power, and salvation) in the rôle of an engineer creating a new country.

IT WOULD have been most surprising if natural avidity, the thirst for gain in its modern form which came to be called capitalism, had not seized upon these elements. But capitalism created nothing: it financed "progress" without paying royalties to its authors, and to the detriment of its workmen. Thus it was that the application of science to social life, fostered by a mystical doctrine which tended to the joint salvation of cosmos and human spirit, suddenly changed its sign and turned into a scourge by creating the proletariat, once the unrestrained ambitions of the Napoleons of industry had seized upon it without further scruple.

This profound paradox of the technical age arises from the fact that its gifts were not expected. Western society of the 19th century —caught unprepared by an event which astonished it marvellously, and of which it could not measure the coming amplitude— fell into a double mistake: it mistook the end of technics and it misunderstood how technics could be made use of. It was unable to foresee the appalling price it was bound to have to pay for the anarchical development of technology. The bait of enormous and swift profits and the temptation to power (not over Nature but over men) blinded this society to the means being employed. That lack of foresight, this false start, had to be dearly paid for —and is being paid for still—by the industrial proletariat, which has had to defray the "human costs" of the operation from the beginning.* As for those who derived a material profit from it, they paid a price less visible and tangible, for there is no measuring spiritual values, nor what a man loses by slaying them inside himself.

Historically, the paradox is brought home to us if we compare the realities with the corresponding states of mind in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the 19th century, the technical advance created among the common people an inhuman poverty, but in the great majority of middle-class élites an overflowing optimism. In the 20th century it has been the other way about. The masses have accepted technical progress and have made it an article of faith, whereas the élites view it with growing pessimism. The shift is eloquent.

In 1835, Andrew Ure, in the *Philosophy of Manufacture*, extolled the factories "which exceeded in number, in value, in utility, and in architectural nobility, the celebrated monuments of Asiatic, Egyptian, and Roman

* As regards what alchemy set itself to do spiritually, I can only refer to the works of C. G. Jung. In *Mensch und Technik* by Donald Brinkmann, will be found numerous examples showing the influence of "alchemical dreams" on inventions of the 18th and 19th centuries. Their genealogy goes back to Paracelsus, via Hieronymus Cardanus, Leibniz, Denis Papin, across the pietists of the 18th century, and issues in a pleiad of enquirers more or less "raving," whose *mysticism* was decisive for the greater part of the technical advance. Let us note on the other side that two of the great mystics of the period were mining engineers—Swedenborg and Novalis.

* The Roman term of "proletarians," as applied to industrial workers, was introduced by Sismondi as early as 1819. Thirty years later Marx was able to say rightly that the modern forces of production made of the proletarians "the living counterpart of a dead mechanism."

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despotism." But as early as 1846 Michelet heralded the pessimistic reaction:

> What a humiliation to behold, beside the machine, man fallen so low! It is heart-rending to go over those marvellous houses in which iron and brass, dazzling and polished, seem to go of their own accord, seem to think and will, while man, weak and pale, is the humble servant of the steel giants.... I admired sadly; it was impossible to avoid noticing at the same time the men's pitiful faces, the withering girls, the children twisted and puffy.

The European middle classes were unaware of all this in the 19th century, as under Hitler they did not know about the concentration camps. Yet the number of proletarians who died of poverty around their factories during the whole of the last century no doubt exceeds the number of persons killed in Nazi concentration camps, if not the number of dead in Kolyma and other places of "re-education."

In the 20th century, this situation has been reversed. American and Scandinavian workers have the product of their work delivered to their door: motor-cars, wireless, frigidaires, tinned food, television. They renew acquaintance with Nature at the week-end, or else in their paid holidays. They imagine, further, that "the irresistible movement of history" is more and more on their side. Meanwhile, the cultivated middle class, its conscience pricked a hundred years late by the social crimes of its grandfathers; influenced by reading the best thinkers and a thousand bad ones; terrified moreover, by the H-bomb, takes a sorry view of "technical progress." We have witnessed in the last fifty years the development of an attitude which recalls Manichæism, even though the values are reversed: it is no longer Nature that stands for evil, it is man's handiwork, inexorable technics, personified and mythologised, which now rule over us and empty us of our humanity.

III. Back to the Axis

UNLIKE Buddhism and Manichæism, Christian orthodoxy does not condemn the tangible world of Nature. The doctrine of the Incarnation is enough to forbid that. Nature has been subjected to corruption, not of its own will, but on account of sin (Romans, VIII, 18–24), and is to be redeemed by means of redeemed man. It follows that man's efforts to subject Nature to the human will and to human wants would be good if they proceeded from the divine effort at work in man, bad if they proceeded from human pride. Evil is not in things but in man. It is bound up with our freedom. It belongs to our human situation, as the obverse belongs to the reverse. How then can technics, created by man, acquire an independent existence? Its evil comes from our fault, and its good is part of our effort to attain salvation. Those writers to-day who, as regards technical progress, nevertheless adopt a neo-Manichæan position, are actuated by two motivations which need to be distinguished.

1. The Christian idea, that evil is in man and that Nature is innocent, makes them fear that technics will increase the human capacity to do evil rather than good, and at the same time throw man out of step with the rhythms of Nature considered only in their regulating aspect. Human pessimism is here conjoined to naturalist optimism.

2. The idea of Evil is projected afresh, not upon Nature, but upon a personified Technics and its products, like the Bomb, which are thus endowed with a kind of intrinsic capacity to harm man. This is a return to magic.

The twin confusion appears to me to account for the most obvious mistakes perpetrated by the "anti-moderns" I referred to.

The Mistake about the Bomb. I wrote on the morrow of Hiroshima:*

> The Bomb is not at all dangerous. It is a thing. What is horribly dangerous is man. He it was who made the Bomb and who gets ready to use it. To control the Bomb is absurd. Committees are appointed to restrain it! It is as if I were to hurl myself at a chair to stop it from going to break a Chinese vase. If the Bomb is left alone, it will do nothing, plainly. It will stay quiet in its crate. So please let us hear no more tales. What we need to control is man.

The Mistake about the Telephone. "Enslavement" to the telephone is one of the clichés of our time. But the telephone never

* *The Last Trump* (New York, 1946).

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did anything of its own accord, and it is invariably *somebody* who calls you by means of this speaking-trumpet. If you run to answer, irritated by the noise, it is you who expected something which you wanted not to miss. So you are only your own slave.

The Mistake about the Fine Car. That man, they say, is the slave of his car. See what trouble he takes with it. He travels on its account, he is ruining himself for it, and some day, on its account, he will kill himself. Yet somebody else is doing the same for the woman he desires, or for a work of art, or for his drug. The tyranny is exerted by our passions, not by technics on their own.

The Mistake about Standardisation of Work. We are told over and over again from both Left and Right that assembly line work de-humanises men, and that we are living in a soul-less world of uniformity and mass-production. Here is the serious feature of the matter: not the feeling of being part of "a soul-less world" but the fact that men are now no more than "the living counterparts of a dead mechanism." Now, for this the dead mechanism cannot be to blame. It is not the machine that turns a man into a slave. It is a certain behaviour which other men impose on a workman, not so much to facilitate his handling of his machine, as to ensure that he shall keep up with it for the sake of a standard output. It is the output that man is then the slave of, whatever economic system demands it, capitalist or communist. Taylor thought of a workman as a human machine that could be completely timed. His system, not the machine, is what enslaves man. But Taylor created his system according to materialistic notions of man which were the product of the century of enlightenment. Blame these notions, not technics.

The Mistake about Inventions. Leonardo's "Flying Man" was going to drop snow on sweltering cities in summer; the aeroplane drops other things. Einstein's brilliant discoveries have culminated in the atom bomb; a curse on invention! But what are people trying to say? Is it imagined that some invention could be employed *only* for good? Such an invention would be the work of the Devil: it would deprive man of his freedom, which God has willed for him.

IV. The Real Problem

THE great complaint of the 20th century against technics would have been justified a hundred years earlier: against the vile and unhealthy factory, workmen might well have said through the mouth of a poet of the time:

> *The air of our workshops is rotting our lungs,*
> *And we die with our gaze fixed on woodland and dale.*

To-day the progress of technics restores the country to townspeople, manual and office and professional workers alike. Technics have done more to draw men near to Nature than have the back-to-Nature theories which condemn technics. It was the Middle Ages which were remote from Nature; they were afraid of it.* The classical age thought it improper. Romanticism looked upon it with stirred feelings, but did not bathe in it physically. Fondness for sun-bathing on the beach has been contemporaneous with the motor-car.

Technics in their infancy created the industrial proletariat, but it is technics alone that can rescue the proletariat from its situation and from the hideous setting of its present existence. What abolished slavery in Europe was not scholasticism, but the improvement of agricultural technology—in particular, the harnessing of horses by means of a rigid head-stall. The proletariat will not be emancipated thanks to our protests against assembly-line work, but thanks to the replacement of servile workers by robots. The factory without workers, shortly to be achieved, will solve the problem of "the workman, slave of the machine."

But once the pseudo-problems are set aside —and the working class "emancipated" not by Communists but unambiguously by tech-

* The only "pleasant" descriptions of Nature in medieval poetry and painting are of orchards. The rest is terror.

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nics—two great and very real problems will confront mankind in the West. One, a danger: technocracy. The other, a bewildering promise: leisure.

TECHNOCRACY:—A man who loses his sense of the final ends for which he is alive is bound to begin talking about "the tyranny of technics." It is only then that technics become a genuine danger; not indeed technics themselves but the man who talks that way. Ernst Jünger has clearly seen that technics incline us to a nihilist morality, their motto being that of an action "without why or wherefore," without human cause and without human purpose.

Repudiating the great alchemist dream, one often reduced technics to the sole and immediate motives of profit, well-being, and military force. Deprived of long-term objectives, they can only come within the compass of current morals, and of the abstract or customary rules of those morals. But individual morality remains without hold upon them—private profit depends more and more on the public economy; well-being, on the average standard of living of a nation. And "the needs of national defence" determine science itself, the source of inventions. The only morality henceforth powerful enough to regulate the technical element would therefore be social morality, which it falls to the great states to define.

To overlook the final ends of human life must then land us in technocracy, which is the government of means over ends. And morality, when determined by states, leads to totalitarian dictatorships. (God is replaced by Society, and—the state being the sole representative of Society—there is no recourse or appeal from its decisions.) Evolution in the direction of closed societies seems to us all the more inevitable in that it is going on under our very eyes—has been going on for nearly half a century. It has been seen above how technics contribute to this not of themselves, but by a certain use which man makes of technics. Whence the idea, current among the élites, that a little more technics can only produce a little more state socialism and an equally little less liberty.

In truth, state socialism is not to be arrested; but it is possible to foster technics till decisive successes produce a new situation. If to-morrow technics can pay the masses in leisure on a more generous scale than it has ever paid shareholders in dividends, the technocrat will still be in command of the means, but his prestige will vanish to the precise extent that leisure and its content become a vital and exciting problem. Thereupon the "serious" will change sides. He whose job is to run a colossal factory without workmen will reign sovereign over absence. The famous "technical exigencies" will no longer concern anybody but him. What will he be able to suggest to human beings made free for new forms of work and of creativeness?

The present task appears to me to be far less the applying of a moral brake to technics than accelerating technics strongly, to the point at which nothing will any longer obstruct us from at last reaping the human benefits.

LEISURE:—Is this cure of the technical disease by technics itself a utopia? Let us first see to what extent it has already been carried out.

The average standard of living in Europe rose, we are told, from 1 to 15 between 1800 and 1950. (More closely, it is stated to be ten times higher in 1954 than in 1880.) These figures, I confess, do not much persuade me. The very idea of "an average standard of living" is not very clear, and grows even less clear when multiplied. (What does the word "living" mean if we are told that we live ten or fifteen times better than our ancestors did?) But here is something perfectly clear: from 1890 to 1954 the working week in the cotton and wool trades dropped from 65 to 40 hours, the working year for railwaymen from 3,900 hours to 2,000 hours; and production steadily increased.

Leisure thus assumes the guise of a subproduct of technics. And yet, was this sub-

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product not one of the underlying intents of technical invention to begin with? And, becoming ever more abundant, will it not one day soon look like the real aim of the undertaking? This supposes, of course, that a certain saturation point of natural needs will be reached. Technics have added to the number of men whose needs they have increased. It may seem as though the more they are developed, the more the prospect recedes of satisfying the human needs which they are pushing forward. Will the donkey ever catch up with the carrot it has been running after for a century and a half?

In fact, the distance between the means of technics and one of their possible aims—leisure—has diminished by a third during that time. A second aim is to ensure that the subsistence of mankind, which is growing by 70,000 souls a day; and this second aim has seemed to recede as the West grows clearly conscious of the lot of the great Asian masses, both under-nourished and uncontrollably prolific. But the fact that there has been this new piece of awareness fixes finally for technics one properly human objective. It is now the means—which remain to be found—that will have to be adapted to the *recognised* purpose, not the other way round, as previously.

These means still waiting to be found we already possess in principle—nuclear energy, chlorella, photo-synthesis, plans on a world-wide scale. Twenty to thirty years hence, according to some experts, a third of the population of the planet—then much greater in number—will be enough, working four hours a week, for satisfying (far better than to-day) all our "material" needs—food and transportation, housing, hygiene, and pleasure. I readily see the merely theoretical aspect of these figures: that they assume a socialised distribution of mass-produced goods in great abundance at a very low price; that the development of Africa, Asia, and the polar regions will provide fresh "occasions for work"; and finally that atomic warfare may ruin everything before the egg is hatched. But the egg is there, bearing its germ and our future—that future which we must be ready to look squarely in the face.

V. The Serious Thing in Life

It is said: What will the masses do if, thanks to technics, they are indeed suddenly set free to such an extent? I have no idea. Was anybody more clear in about 1830 concerning what technics were going to produce? Our duty this time is to see the problems squarely instead of repressing them because they make us dizzy.

We are on the threshold of an era *in which culture will be the serious thing in life.* (It always was, but now we shall see it.) Hitherto, it was work which filled the essence of our days, and upon which our fate depended: pay, food, and lodging. If technics to-morrow—as they can—allow society to meet these elementary requirements at a very low price, "the empty time" of leisure* will become the real time of our daily lives. The question: "What shall I make of my life?" will no longer be repressed by the reply—several thousand years old—"Earn it!"

I have no intention of now depicting some utopia which might amuse our descendants. Everything may change radically and very soon, not so much owing to material factors which I may have overlooked, or cannot foresee, as on account of *our free decisions.* (The invention of the wheel is not what counts in itself; it is indeed the use to which a people decided to put the wheel; chariots and wagons in the West, toys and ornaments among the Aztecs.) One certain thing is that technical progress is going to take an unprecedented leap, producing a situation in which our real wishes, our real orientations, and our real opinions will be manifest transparently, and will be followed by almost immediate effects. Such wishes and orientations I may try to forecast on the basis of our present disposition.

* The *Encyclopédie* of 1765 defines leisure as "the empty time" (*le temps vuide*). It assumes accordingly that work is real time, full time. It is this hierarchy of values that has held sway down to our day. It partly explains why trade unions are opposed to the creation of leisure by technics, e.g., by automation; for they picture leisure as the "empty time" known as unemployment. That leisure should be the actual goal of the machine age is a suggestion they will not yet entertain.

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Released from material work, a man of the West at once turns to travel, sport, games, and eroticism. The French experiment with paid holidays has shown this on a small scale, but over too short a time for the sequel to be distinguishable. A rather longer trial is furnished by the inhabitants of the Arctic circle —Sweden and Norway—who are condemned to leisure during the six months of their winter. They take up culture. Now it happens that the West has increased tenfold or a hundredfold during this century the instruments and means of culture. More books than ever are published, and dirt cheap. Libraries and cultural centres are becoming general. The whole of the world's painting can now come on to our walls in the form of reproductions that "take you in"; the whole of music is delivered to the home by means of wireless and records; and state schooling is happily duplicated by hundreds of works of popularisation which enable the people of the West for the first time in history to take a general review of their own civilisation. This is to say that we are already increasing the occasions for understanding our lives better —and also for misunderstanding the masterpieces better.

As for the quality, creativeness, or relative noxiousness of this invasion of culture, nobody can foretell anything. I am content to say that everything is leading to it for both better and worse. In other words, everything is leading to a religious age. For culture, when all is said and done, is but a different prism of the religious sense upon those activities of ours called creative, from pure mathematics to pottery, and from metaphysics to carving furniture. That is how it is that technics to-morrow will bring us back, practically, like science, to the religious options. And I cannot imagine any drug strong enough to divert the human race away from them.

I know well that the most intense religious life has long meant *askesis* and renunciation —in the West as in the East. In fact, it is—and should be—especially accession to truth, and means do not matter. *Askesis* was actually an effort to resist technics in their primitive form, as mysticism was a movement to go beyond (or to withdraw ahead of) the formulated dogma; but both leaned on the object of their renunciation and depended closely on it. The *askesis* of to-morrow may have difficulty in taking the form of a return to Nature since technics are what will make this return possible by producing leisure. And as for mysticism, it presupposes above all an exact knowledge of dogma. "Mysticism in the savage state"—to use the expression Claudel coined to describe the case of Rimbaud—flourishes thanks simply to the scattered reflections of the dogma and the liturgy over the culture with which it is impregnated. That is why knowledge of the dogmas and of the fundamental options of our religions will be to-morrow the first pre-condition of the heresies and gnosis that are destined to appear. Otherwise these would but repeat the old, which did not vanish without reason, or else resurrect doctrines the creative style of which has had its day.* I do not say that they will forego these mistakes. But I notice that over a public hitherto utterly ignorant of that order of realities, culture is diffusing a certain curiosity which will not be stopped short. Television and wireless deliver the world to your home, and the solemn spectacles organised by art or by sport are preparing both masses and individual for unexpected liturgies.

Many shallow minds imagine man as a kind of balloon who asks only to be "lifted" as soon as he is set free from daily cares. The proof that he is nothing of the kind is that our greatest mystics lived in the worst possible physical conditions. Technics can do nothing for the spirit, any more than lack of well-being has brought about anything against the spirit. I say only that we may be cast into an era where religious questions will be *more serious* than material questions, economic "laws," the backwash of politics, the cinema, or art itself are to-day.

* Our orientalist sects sometimes suggest somebody who might invent a machine for climbing stairs instead of taking the lift.

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LETTER FROM BUCHAREST

Art by the Square Yard

BUCHAREST to-day is full of foreign "cultural" delegations. Daily, outside the big hotels, The Athénée and The Lido, fleets of Russian-made limousines are drawn up. Into these vehicles—after heavy meals accompanied by much clinking of glasses and exchange of amenities—step groups of Italian writers, British scientists, Syrian astronomers, and French composers. They are driven on tours of State Publishing establishments, Palaces of Culture, and Writers' Rest homes. They listen to Rumanian music and hear talks on Rumanian literature. Some give lectures themselves. An Oxford scientist spoke in Bucharest on "Forest Fires before the Appearance of Man"; and the Italians made many speeches in Constanza about Ovid, who died there two thousand years before. The Rumanian government is anxious to see foreigners to-day, preferably in delegations. But even to a member of the press like myself, they also allow complete freedom of movement. I was able to visit Constanza on the Black Sea, Sinaia, Brasov, and the cities of Transylvania. I was shadowed, perhaps by as many as four agents at once (one of whom I caught red-handed); but no attempt was made to interfere with me when I spoke to people on the street, in trams, cafés, and trains.

For the first two days, my contacts were official. President Groza himself spoke to a British delegation, which I was accompanying. The note of friendliness in his address was mixed with self-congratulation. He explained how he and his colleagues had brought Culture into the hands of the people, redistributed land on a popular basis, opened schools, established cheap restaurants for the needy, and so on. "In Rumania to-day," he said, "there are no luxury goods in the shops. But smoke rises from our factory chimneys. Everyone is plainly dressed. But there are no unemployed on our streets. The old corrupt politics of before the war which benefited only the rich are over...."

Some of what he said is undoubtedly true. Rumanian public life before the war was as corrupt as any in Europe. And there is no doubt that the working classes were miserable. For hiring, dismissal, sick-leave, holidays, health, the workers were subject to the caprice of powerful owners. Industrialists, if they were clever, could do what they liked. Unfortunately, the claims of the President to have corrected all this are not accepted by the people themselves. From the conversations I had with them, they even gave the impression that they preferred the good old "corrupt days." They said bluntly that President Groza was a liar, and his government the cruellest that had ever existed in Rumania. They told hair-raising stories of Russian troops, of the *Siguranța* or Secret Police, and of how they and their friends had served long terms of hard labour on the Danube-Black Sea canal, after being sentenced without trial. To check these stories was impossible, but dozens of them confirmed one another. They were the stories of desperate, frightened people who took the risk of being seen talking to me (they said) if I would "tell the West."

One at least of President Groza's statements I was able to confirm with my own eyes. There is no luxury in Rumania to-day. The goods in the shop windows of the principal streets, such as Calea Victoria, must repel all but the most determined or famished of customers. They are thrown in pell-mell, with grubby price tickets attached. A small restaurant like Capsa, where the officers used to dine before the war, has had the decorations ripped from the walls, to remove any vestiges of the hated Western or French *chic*. And the women of Bucharest, who once rivalled the Parisians in elegance and fashion, are drab and listless. The same can be said for the buildings. What we call "maintenance" in connection with a house does not exist; the paintwork outside is blistered and peeling, the cornices crumble and fall.

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THE people I was supposed to meet were the writers. Here, too, was anomaly and contradiction. Once a man has been accepted as a "writer," he belongs to a class apart; he is fantastically well paid (even by Western standards); he frequents "delegation" hotels like The Athénée, where the food is as good—and as expensive—as it is in Paris; he is well dressed, well housed; he may even possess a car.

I was shown an official document (an Order of the Council of Ministers, dated 15th July, 1957) dealing with the payment of these writers; it reads like something out of Orwell's *1984*. The poet, the novelist, the dramatist, the critic, the film-script writer, even the composer of a scientific thesis or the editor of a dictionary, all have their places in the scale of piece-rates, as if they were turning out bolts in a factory. To assess the relative merits of these different works of art could not have been easy. And I asked how it was decided, for instance, that the music of a ballet, a symphony, or an oratorio should be worth just over half of that for an opera? Or that two sonatas equal one quartet? In sculpture, value depends—the document says—on the height and number of persons represented (60 per cent. more for each "additional personage"), and also on whether it is an equestrian statue or not. Basso, mezzo, and alto relief are paid for by the square yard. For paintings, the minimum price for a portrait is twice as high as that for a still-life; and the price for a "composition" four times as high again.

It seems that this emphasis on square-yards production means that artists in a Peoples' Democracy must fulfil their norms, like anyone else, provided (to quote official documents again), "they create works which contribute to the formation of the socialist conscience in the new man, which foster the heroic fights of the people, and which show pride for the achievements of the Rumanian Workers' Party." Not all writers have been able to satisfy this last demand. The poetess Maria Banush, for instance, had her name removed from the Poet's Roster for writing the poem, "No, never . . .," in which she declared that Nature was a more suitable subject for verse than social reform. She opened with the lines:

No, never shall I forbear to sing
Of lightning, the sun, and young Love on the wing . . .

and she went on to extol these things above all else. For this, she was bitterly attacked in the party paper *Scânteia*. "The mistake of Comrade Maria Banush is that, in speaking of Nature and Love as subjects dear to her, she is isolating herself from the entirety of themes proper to a literature that places in the centre of its preoccupations, Man—the advanced Man of our days." Maria Banush suffered a temporary eclipse, and was only admitted to the Poet's Roster after being called before the Council of Ministers itself, and there being moved to recant. "It was necessary for me to be present at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers," she then wrote, "in the midst of the heroes, to live through every pore, and to imbue myself wholly with the full beauty and grandeur of that spectacle, to realise my error. . . ."

Modern Rumanian poetry, within these strict limits, naturally deals with subjects which seem prosaic to us. The poet Petre Sascu treats a political gathering in this way:

A large crowd that Sunday at the Cultural Centre,
The peasants are listening, all who could enter.
The chairman reads out, just received from the city,
The latest decisions of the Central Committee.

The poet Iosif Negrea writes in the old peasant-ballad style, to dedicate his poem to a Collective Farm:

Green leaf of the clover,
Comrades all come over!
Green leaf of the rose,
Come, join the Kolkhoz!
Let us through our joint endeavour
Poverty escape for ever.

Mihai Benius quotes these verses about a plebiscite in *Problems of the New Literature*:

Your own voter's certificate? Why yes,
It truly stands for nothing less
Than the new presence in all men's concerns. . . .
. . . Concerns of all who now are well aware
Of the small things that form the flow of life,
Deeds and endeavours, wants and sins and strife,
But are no less aware of all the implications
Of A. Vishinsky's fight before the United Nations.

All these are serious examples of "socialist realism."

IT IS the same in the theatre. A typical "progressive" play like *The Lovers* shows a young woman factory worker who has become "chief of cadres" (a kind of personnel manager, with police powers). She is in love with the manager who, although a decent man and excellent at his job, lacks "vigilance." But she is vigilant enough for both. So, in spite of getting no proper support from her senior and lover, she

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unmasks the saboteurs and tools of the Anglo-American imperialists. It is not surprising that these plays have failed to attract the public. The theatres are kept filled largely by distributing free tickets to selected groups of workers, soldiers, and school children.

In an attempt to win back the public, an ingenious device was employed last year by the actors themselves. The first performance of a play would be acted with every respect for official requirements. But after the play had been seen by the official critics, the actors would change the play, introducing remarks of a satirical nature. Entire pages of dialogue were altered in this way. The method was most successful for a while, and troupe after troupe played to full houses roaring with laughter. But an alert woman journalist soon discovered this, and in a scathing article in *Contemporanul*, the actors were condemned for "misleading the public." After this a host of actors hastened to perform "self-criticism."

Perhaps the most damning comment on the people's attitude to their rulers is to be found in the recent government decrees. A law was passed, just before I arrived, against "Hooliganism, Vagrancy, Profiteering, and Prostitution," under which, it appears, it is possible to arrest almost anybody for anything. The official description of these offences in the local newspapers reveals the small, ingenious "pin pricks" with which the Rumanians show their true feelings. One crime is "throwing sticks, stones, or other such objects, or dirty, irritant, or corrosive substances at vehicles." But who, a Rumanian pointed out to me, possesses a "vehicle" in Rumania to-day—other than government officials? Another offence is "removing direction signs." Who requires direction signs, he said, in a land where everyone walks or goes by public transport? All these crimes are savagely punished. Two brothers got three years, as "hooligans," for arguing with a tram conductor. A man got three years for disputing a bill in a restaurant. The most interesting crime of all to me was that of the youth who got five years for "disturbing a cultural reunion and throwing the custodian in the lake."

Many people told me that this law was simply a device to obtain forced labour for reed extraction in the Danube delta, (where a new process for turning reeds into wood pulp and paper has been discovered). Certainly, when I mentioned the words "reeds" and "Danube delta" to a girl and her fiancé in a café, where we were having a harmless conversation about Rumanian poetry, she went pale, refused to go on talking to me, and kept looking over her shoulder.

TO IMAGINE, as many claimed, that *all* the government leaders do these things wholly for selfish or sadistic reasons would be rash. Some of the leaders are idealists who have taken great risks and endured hardships during the years when personal rewards and success for their Movement seemed impossible. A few risked their lives for what seemed a lost cause. They are professional revolutionaries, not really governors at all. And this is why the people—particularly civilised Latins who have grown tired of living in an atmosphere where everyone is continually expected to be a "revolutionary"—hate them. These men have forced a Latin people, accustomed throughout the centuries to looking always West, above all to France, to look forcibly East. They have brought a country nearer to Orwell's 1984 than would seem possible outside fiction.

But the Rumanians have a saying, *apa trece, pietrele raman*, "the water flows, the stones remain." Having had thirty-three invasions and occupations in their history, they know that everything passes. This explains why there has been no rising against their masters, in the fiery Hungarian manner. Demonstrations of sympathy for the Hungarians did take place last October in Bucharest and the University cities of Cluj and Timosciara—as I was informed by eye-witnesses. But the people were waiting to see if the Western powers would act. Then they too would have shed their blood. Even the Security Police were frightened of this; they disappeared entirely from the streets between the 23rd October and the 4th November, while the students were demonstrating. Only when it was clear where victory lay in Hungary, did they come out in force to arrest the demonstrators. Hundreds of these disappeared overnight. There were no trials, of course, and they are now presumably pulling up reeds in the Danube delta.

Anthony Rhodes

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NOTES FROM A DIARY

Conscripts for Science

LIFE is short, Art is long.

What, then, is Science?

Cumulative through time, co-operative in effort, and, in its immensely powerful means for changing the face of living, tending to reduce the arts to the status of handicrafts.

Any contemporary scientist expert in his field knows more than any past scientist working in the same field, is theoretically capable of producing a result unobtainable by the past scientist, however great his genius. The scientist is served by the accumulation of past knowledge and the vastly improved machinery of science. He is in this way the exact opposite of the artist, who, the more he knows about the past, the more he is conscious of being able to produce only lesser results.

The individual scientist is a unit multiplied by the knowledge and technique at his disposal; the individual artist is a sum from whom the achievements of the past are subtracted. The scientist, by taking thought, has added to his stature; the artist, by taking thought, is conscious of the reduction of his. The measure of the scientist is the mind that can control the machine: and this mind can be enormously helped by the machine itself (which can, for example, perform most of his calculations for him). The measure of the artist is the whole man; and he is in no way assisted by modern inventions which can only make him conscious of the more easily attained wholeness of past artists living in less complex circumstances.

We tend to distinguish to-day those countries in which art is "free," and those in which artists are either silenced or (which is the same thing) made the verbal or visual agents of the central organising political brain of the State. But the politics of one part of the world may, in some respects, simply be the logical application of a situation which exists in other parts. The world-wide reaction to the Sputniks was a demand in all the democracies for more money to spend on science, and for increasing, through the educative system, the number of scientists. This is to recognise the intellectual situation, in which politics must become the agent of scientists, who, in turn, are the agents of their cumulative, co-operative knowledge which may either improve material conditions or destroy the world. In doing either, "we"—whoever "we" are—have to be first.

In countries like Russia where this logic of invention has already been applied to politics, the results are seen in the complete transformation of the arts into a branch of political advertising. The appearance, like a long-delayed time-bomb, of the exception to prove the rule, a novel, hoarded up for years, by the one surviving great pre-revolutionary poet—Boris Pasternak—is a warning—opposite of that other warning, the Sputnik. But Pasternak's novel is an isolated phenomenon. The isolation is underlined by the ban on its appearance in Khruschev's post-Stalinist Russia, and by Communist endeavours to prevent it from appearing anywhere. Poems and novels can be banned but no one can ban the H-bomb or the Sputniks.

The health of any branch of intellectual life (with the exception perhaps of poetry) depends largely on the amount of energy—much of it coming from outside sources—poured into it. Before the Industrial Revolution, tremendous energies and material resources supported arts allied to religion. One effect of this was that the intellects devoted to the arts balanced those devoted to war and science. But to-day the idea that "the intellectuals" are "the writers" survives only in France (where literary prestige dies hard) and among PEN Clubs.

It may be that governments and the public have quietly and without fuss decided that all the efforts of civilisation now have to go into

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science, and that education in humanities must be almost abandoned. This was already happening in America before the present scare.

The scientists, who are the priests of the religion that projects ballistic missiles into outer space, are bound to become more numerous and powerful. Their creed is the service of the objective aims of science, which a good many of them link up with ideas of progress and human betterment. Probably scientists will become more interested in politics which encourage science, in the belief that science-directed politics will transform the condition of mankind. They may even attempt to influence politicians. Unfortunately, however, an immense concentration of political power into a few hands would be necessary to make politics, in a benevolent sense, scientific; and if ever scientists attain the influence of power politicians it will be their power that is using their science, not their science their power. Doubtless, since the Twentieth Party Congress there are scientists who, seeing that something was wrong with the scientific socialism of Stalin, think this is because statesmen are not scientific enough. But no one, least of all a scientist who becomes a statesman, will ever be scientific enough. Scientists ought to take a look at themselves. And we all ought to take a look at scientists.

This brings me back to the non-scientific intellectuals, educators and educated in the humanities, the writers and artists. "All a poet can do to-day is to warn." This vanishing class of survivors can only point out that certain truths, such as the laws of tragedy, operate in situations where idealistic rationalists act on the belief that their power provides a solution for the defects of their humanity.

1957, the year of the Sputnik, and of the appearance of Pasternak's novel, is also the bicentenary of the birth of William Blake, who in *Jerusalem* (a poem which reads very like to-day's newspaper headlines) wrote:

I see the Four-Fold Man, the Humanity in deadly sleep
And its fallen Emanation, The Spectre and its cruel Shadow.
I see the Past, Present, and Future existing all at once
Before me. O Divine Spirit, sustain me on thy wings,
That I may awake Albion from his long and cold repose;
For Bacon & Newton, sheath'd in dismal steel, their terrors hang
Like iron scourges over Albion; Reasonings like vast Serpents
Infold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations.

Anton Slonimski in Tokyo

FOUR years after the war, when I worked in UNESCO, Anton Slonimski was my chief at the head of the Section of Letters. I was glad to meet him again in Tokyo, representing the Polish writers, of whose union he is President. His speech was one of the most courageously intelligent of the PEN Congress. It ended with a warning that the Stalin era might be repeated, and that we might still have to give battle to what Slonimski called "the resurgent demons."

One afternoon, in the hall of the Hotel Imperial, I had a long conversation with Mr. Slonimski, on which I made notes. He asked me to tell ENCOUNTER's readers of the improvements in the conditions for writers in Poland. Since October 1956, the Polish Writers' Union had become a truly democratic organisation, with its officers elected by secret ballot. Before this, Slonimski said, it resembled a Salvation Army, with confessions and exhortations. But now the aim of the Writers' Union is to defend the moral and material status of writers, and to ensure freedom of expression.

At the same time, Slonimski thought that the Polish Republic had done good things for literature which should not be overlooked. For instance, they had made the classics widely available and had done much to improve the culture of the masses. He insisted that government patronage was still needed by Polish writers, who, belonging to a poor country, needed support. Before the war they had received this from the Church and the Bourgeoisie, and to-day it would be dangerous to drop all governmental care.

The Writers' Union had now succeeded in getting reasonable people into government publishing houses, and they had obtained some remarkable benefits for writers: for instance, there are now in Poland 42 scholarships, paid for by the government, enabling writers to go to France, Italy, or England. When this scheme was first put forward it was suggested that these writers should make a report on their

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activities abroad. But this had been rejected, and they need make no reports.

Slonimski said: "Stalinism was the biggest failure in history." He smiled and added. "Mr. Gomulka does not like me saying that. Once he told me that I was a public nuisance. But he did so in a friendly way. Gomulka is not an intellectual, but he is intelligent."

He said that in the work of the young Polish writers there was a strong reaction to-day against Social Realism, and this took the form of going back to Dadaism—"that old stuff. In painting we have a kind of abstractionism which is really nostalgic. Abstractionism, I think, ought to be architectural. But we have exotic abstractionism amidst bad architecture."

At present, the influence of *Waiting for Godot* is very strong in Poland. Previously writers were influenced by Eliot and Auden. But now the younger writers have abandoned the intellectual concept of poetry. "Personally, I am not quite in sympathy with this, since I have always been fighting for ideas in my poetry."

He spoke of the problem—the real problem —of vodka drinking in Poland. "It is not just that people drink excessively, but they do so with the purpose of producing an effect of shock on themselves. Thus they will drink deliberately on an empty stomach. They become dangerous."

All the same, he thought there was much talent among the students, and spoke of student groups who run a witty, rather charming political satiric theatre called BIM-BOM, which has been a tremendous success.

Slonimski's last remark was: "I never regret that I went back to Poland, because when I got there I had the feeling that I was needed by my friends and readers."

The Puppets and their Aides

IN JAPAN, the theatre that puzzled me most was the puppet performance at Osaka. In a Japanese puppet play, the puppet actors and actresses on the stage are accompanied by two masked men, and one unmasked, who is the master operator. These three figures stand behind the puppet, plunging their hands into its insides, to manipulate its face and limbs. Two of them assistants, and the third with a serious attentive expression, they look like a surgeon and his aides who galvanise a lifeless body into movement. When the play demands ten or more puppet actors there are thirty or more of these intent manipulators on the stage all performing their operations at once.

The audience apparently manages to discount the attendants and to concentrate on the puppets as though they were unaccompanied. Myself, I found I was fascinated by the black-hooded assistants and the master-surgeons, and took little notice of the puppets. Since my return home, the image of the puppets with their triple aides has gradually suggested to me the following thought: that everyone who acts out his or her drama absorbs into it at least two people who are completely occupied, and one other whose gestures are counterpart to his or her own, acting out the story and at the same time making it happen. I doubt whether this has any connection with the symbolism of the Japanese puppet theatre, which deliberately imposes on the audience the artificiality of the mechanical medium. But perhaps it does show how one can be haunted by a metaphor which goes through one's mind until it finds an object of experience to which it can attach itself, like one of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. I doubt whether I shall ever come to appreciate the puppet performances for what they really signify, but they have added to my store of mental images for describing a phenomenon which I had scarcely observed (that whoever acts out a drama has silent assistants) until I saw a stage crowded with thirty figures manipulating ten dolls.

Stephen Spender

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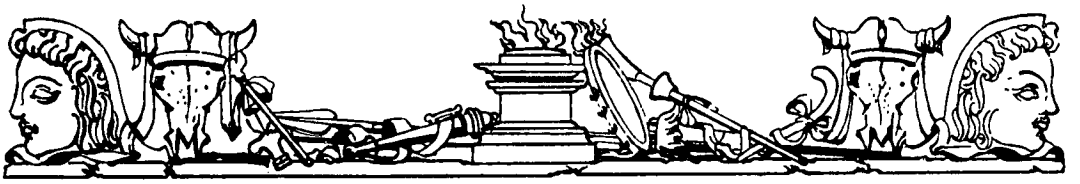
Robin Ironside



THE INSPIRATION OF ANTIQUE PAINTING

THE Muses of classical antiquity have been credited with a very ancient origin. The event of their rapid birth in some pre-Homeric period has been regarded as a mere metempsychosis from an earlier existence in which, as a Triad, they had worn aspects of a still more primitive triple Goddess. Their cult proved to be as enduring as its source was venerable. It continued to survive as a branch of serious theosophy while the worship of more illustrious members of the Olympic pantheon was sinking into a conventional ritual. Throughout this protracted career the sacred nine remained sublimely indifferent to the special needs of the painter and sculptor. These were relegated to the care of the once earthbound deity Hephaestus, a miraculously skilful craftsman but a somewhat querulous and grotesque character; to that of the semi-divine Daedalus whose prestige was also founded on sheer excellence in the practice of applied art; or to that of Athene in her least imposing rôle as patroness of weavers.

That Aphrodite should have been the acknowledged wife of Hephaestus may be a symbol of the fact that the products of expert craftsmanship are rarely without a sensuous grace of their own; and there is, as it were, a touch of groping æsthetic aspiration in the ardour with which the embraces of the adulterous goddess were persistently invited by her husband, though the nature of his assiduity is hardly comparable with the lofty afflatus which the charms of the Muses would have inspired. Their apathy in this respect may easily be misunderstood; it might be true to say that there was not one of them who would have stooped to concern herself specifically with visual art, but the physical characteristics differentiating the arts were never seriously considered on Parnassus; and the office of the Muses was of an exclusively spiritual or cerebral kind. In this sense, their patronage might be equally bestowed on musicians, poets, painters, sculptors, or even potters. A painter might implore Athene to preside at the preparation of his colours; a sculptor might rely on Hephaestus to ensure the successful casting of a bronze; or a musician might petition Hermes (who perfected the mechanism of the lyre) to supervise the tuning of his instrument. But each would properly address a prayer to the Muses for the successful accomplishment of the impalpable objects of his work, its pathos, humour, or sublimity.

Mythology eventually determined the various rôles of the Muses. Tragedy, Comedy, History, Epic, and Lyric poetry were among the æsthetic modes assigned to the supervision of a particular

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goddess; all were exclusively occupied, except, perhaps, Terpsichore, with the mental functions of man; and since this was the case, it was to be expected that there should be no rigorous separation of the various departments of their activity. The domain, in particular, of the pietistic Polyhymnia was at all times vaguely delimited; and indeed the conspicuous characteristic of the Muses was their freedom from the restraints of specialisation. In the words of the Orphic hymn, they were, in a quite general way, "spiritual therapists." Though there was no Muse of sculpture, the epitaph of Praxiteles might refer to the Muses' tutelage of his genius. And we may, with sufficient cause, but not without an effect of pedantry, protest against the allusion in Sophocles to a Muse (as Pater would have translated it) of tectonics. It was precisely with this aspect, the technological aspect, of artistic production that the Muses had no concern. The Greeks apparently recognised that mechanical skill, as many modern artists are thankfully but fruitlessly aware, is no certain pledge of æsthetic achievement. From the nature of the powers bestowed upon the Muses, we may also infer that æsthetic quality was seen by the Greeks to be a quality *sui generis* whether manifest in music, poetry, or the visual arts, and they would not have approved, though they might have understood, the regard with which, in modern times, this truth has been too often treated. Overestimation of the properties of media has tended, in the recent past, to blind criticism to the purely mediatorial functions of the paint-box, the orchestra, the unformed block of marble, or the microphone. The properties of any medium are exigencies which it should be the object of the artist not to satisfy, but dominate or twist to his advantage.

THE legend of the Muses, though it is, so to speak, the mythology of art itself, would be fancifully adduced as the main key to an understanding of the Greek view of art. The data of mythology are altogether too oracular and their interpretation pursues too easily a wilful course. Though it is unlikely to be disputed that the temper and ethos of the Muses are the source, or the reflection of that ideality for which Greek artists up to the end of the classic period consciously strove, there is an element of uncertainty in analogous conclusions founded on any feature less constant and conspicuous than the theoretic, ideal quality of their mission. The tradition, however, that Mnemosyne was the mother of the Muses may well have exegetical significance. Mnemosyne was the goddess of memory and the story that she lay with Zeus and, thereafter, on nine successive nights gave birth to the Muses was recorded by Hesiod, the Muses' principal hagiographer, and, on his august authority, generally accepted. We are used to-day to thinking of the practice of fine art as a "creative" activity, and originality is conventionally esteemed as one of the signs of artistic merit. But this assumption has not at all times been a commonplace of criticism nor are there unequivocal reasons for regarding it as a sound one. It would not, certainly, have been admissible in the ancient world where notions of the beautiful, the uplifting, and the true supplied an æsthetic criterion not more nebulous than the test of "creativity," and an artist might openly plagiarise the work of another in the hope that a successful imitation would rival or surpass the model. Any work of art which is imitative in the sense that its author was not indifferent to the example of other artists, past or present, is so far also commemorative, and it is not perhaps an infringement of the limits of reasonable interpretation to suggest that the Greeks perceived in the fecund Mnemosyne a generative force in which, by her grace, the memory of a man might have some potent share. It would, at any rate, be a point of view consistent with the nature of Greek art and indeed of the nature of the artistic process in general. Nor does it conflict with the usual view that the early association of the Muses with Memory is to be explained by the fact that before men could write, poetry might only be preserved, if it could be remembered. The process of recollection is imperfect; the tricks that Memory plays, the peculiar and irrational transmutations of which it is capable, must be regarded as one of the potential sources of artistic inspiration and we may detect the stimulations of Mnemosyne or her daughters even more in the inaccuracy than in the accuracy of recollection. Much, nowadays, that in fact should be ascribed to the operations of Memory is thoughtlessly claimed as the manifestation of an unverifiable originality or—such is the impiety of

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our critics—of some mysterious creative power. The visions of Blake for example, who has not often been classed as a derivative artist, are, as has been pointed out by Sir Kenneth Clark, demonstrably the flowers of memory.

IT IS of such flowers—of this there can be no doubt—that the extant repertoire of classical painting, which dates almost exclusively from late Hellenistic or early Imperial times, is composed. Greek art was, from the beginning, affected by oriental influences; as a result of the conquests of Alexander and the hellenisation of the Levant, oriental habits of mind might easily be dispersed throughout the civilised world and must have contributed to the distinctively static character of the arts during the centuries which followed the death of Alexander. In the sense that it has no tendency to evolve, Hellenistic art, like that of China, was inorganic. Of the variety of styles available, some doubtless were the produce of individual inspiration, and the same origin may certainly be ascribed to current iconographical conventions. The emergence, however, of a particular style or a particular image involved no automatic depression of the value of antecedent prototypes as models for current practice. The artist or patron of the Hellenistic era had a certain choice of "approved" styles, and, in the field of iconography, the fame of an acknowledged masterpiece might suffice to establish a canon for the treatment of a particular theme. Art prospered amid a widespread commerce of adaptations. It seems possible that pattern-books not only of decorative motives but also of pictorial compositions were freely circulated.

It cannot be said that Hellenistic culture failed to produce artists of genius, but the tendency of the age, in matters of art, to prize acknowledged standards, to repeat what was worth repeating, discouraged the manifestation of strongly individualised personality. This tendency, due, in part, to the influence of oriental attitudes, was strengthened by the zealous determination of the Greek rulers of Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor—a determination in which they were fully supported by the Greek populations of these regions—to re-create in their Asian domains the social and cultural conditions of the Greek mainland. In compliance with this object, artists were encouraged to emulate or copy the masterpieces of Greek painting produced in the 4th century. The fame of these works, already great, was thus increased; they became patterns of excellence for the civilised world; and though none has been preserved, traces of their quality are perceptible in surviving examples of Hellenistic art.

OUR direct knowledge of the character of Hellenistic painting is founded on the collection of pictures recovered from the buried Campanian cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii. Recent literature has attempted to show that a proportion of these reveals the existence of an original, autochthonous school of Italic or even Roman painting. By those processes of scholarship which result in the production of such hypothetical personalities as the Amico di Sandro, a dubious ingenuity has actually identified two of the masters of such a school, the so-called Baroque master and the so-called Tragic master. In the study of Hellenistic art conjecture is unavoidable, but such external evidence as exists points clearly enough to the exotic nature of Campanian painting and certainly provides no warrant for assuming the efflorescence of a native Italian style. It is indeed questionable whether we can, in any respect, legitimately refer to an intrinsically Roman type of art. The Romans themselves were fully aware that the art they practised was a direct appropriation from the Greeks; the differences between Hellenistic painting in Rome and Alexandria were perhaps even less than the differences between French and English ecclesiastical architecture in the 13th century and the mobility of artists and craftsmen in Hellenistic and Imperial times was probably greater than in mediæval Europe. Rome, though her political influence was fatally exerted in the opposite sense, remained a stronghold of Hellenism in everything that concerned the arts. The paintings from Herculaneum and Pompeii are of interest to posterity not for any Latin *venustas* they may be supposed to possess but because they are unique evidence, imperfect but inspiring, of the quality of Greek painting in the 4th century as obscurely figured in the work of generations of emulous successors.

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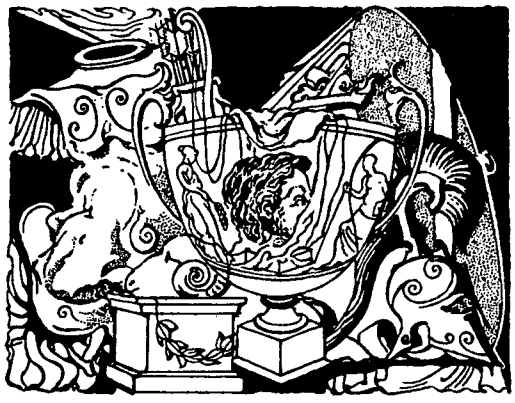
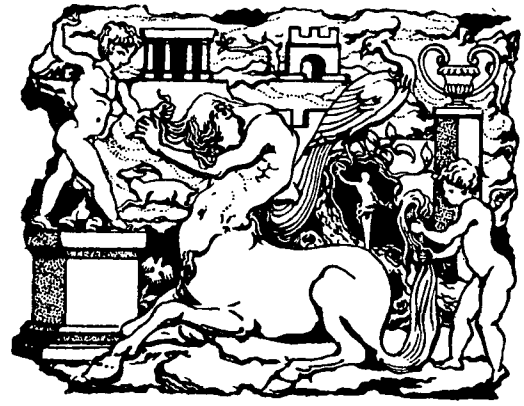


If the fact that these paintings were recovered from the soil of Campania could be used to prove their local origin, it would tend to confirm their Hellenic character. Greek culture flourished in Southern Italy centuries before the founding of Rome and it may be said to have been already established there in legendary times. The geography of the Odyssey was largely Italian; tradition supposes that the Cyclops was a Sicilian, and that the Sirens played and sang in the gulf of Sorrento. Odysseus himself, whose descendants according to Hesiod ruled over the Tyrrhenians, seems to have been regarded by the pre-Roman inhabitants of Southern Italy as a local hero, and his repute as Ulysses spread to the Etruscans to whom he became familiar as Utusti. That one of the earliest Latin translations from Greek poetry should have been the version by Andronicus of the Odyssey has been thought to reflect a proprietary attitude towards its hero. In historical times, the region of Campania was annexed by the colonists of Cuma, the earliest of the various Greek settlements, known collectively as Magna Græcia. Though the importance of Cuma declined, the vigour of Hellenic influences in Campania was preserved and increased by the Greek foundation of Neapolis towards the middle of the 5th century in which colonists from Athens itself were actively concerned. Rome was largely ignorant of the advanced civilisation prevailing in Magna Græcia until the final subjection of the Samnites delivered Southern Italy into her power; and the Romans responded to the revelation of Greek art with unreserved submission to its magnetic stimulus. The prosperous survival of Magna Græcia under Roman domination was too brief to be of decisive significance as attesting the innate Greek character in Roman times of South Italian culture as a whole. The Greek civilisation of Sicily and of such centres on its mainland as Tarentum or Croton was finally swept away in the devastations of the Hannibalic wars.

It remains true, nevertheless, that Neapolis and other settlements in Campania, either Greek or, like Pompeii and Herculaneum, hellenised, escaped this destiny; Philostratus, writing in the closing years of the 3rd century, could describe Neapolis, having regard to the polished manners of its inhabitants and their taste for the fine arts, as virtually a Greek city; and during the Augustan age, when most of the extant paintings from Herculaneum and Pompeii were produced, its citizens continued to speak Greek and preserved their Greek institutions. The artists employed at Herculaneum and Pompeii were not, of course, necessarily natives of Campania; they may have come direct from Greece, from the Hellenised East, or from the schools of Hellenistic art established at Rome. However that may be, the cultural traditions of Herculaneum and Pompeii and, still more emphatically, those of Neapolis, Cuma, or Posidonia, had been mainly Hellenic from remote times and, with infrequent exceptions, these traditions had been tolerated or adopted by Italic, Etruscan, and finally Roman invaders.



THE historical study of individual examples of Campanian art, most of which are now housed in the Museum at Naples, amounts, in nearly all cases, to no more than an assessment of probabilities. Similarities of style or interpretation may indicate the authorship of a single personality or—and the alternative is more often likely—the work of various hands inspired by a common prototype. That the prototype might itself be a Hellenistic work based on the example of some classic original still further increases the difficulty of historical criticism. It is a tragic but provocative defect of the surviving material that it includes no painting which can be proved beyond dispute to mirror the genius of any of the 4th century

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masters whose renown has come down to us. Classical texts provide a sufficient testimony of the equal superiority of Greek sculpture and painting at the height of their development. Painting matured less rapidly than sculpture; and though its classic phase may be said to have dawned in the Periclean age, it was not until the close of the 4th century that the art was brought to perfection. The word is not lightly used; it seems clear that the knowledge possessed by the 4th-century masters of the science of representation, from the uses of perspective to an understanding of the luminosity of shadows, was not surpassed by the achievement of Western European art, and their powers of expression and conception were considered by the ancient world to be unrivalled. The cloudy vision which literature supplies of the progress of Greek painting, from the august, hieratic patriotism of Polygnotus to the Baroque realism of Zeuxis and ultimately to the sovereign graces of Apelles, suggests a reality of which the beauties of the collection at Naples are merely a shadow. It is despairing to read descriptions of *The Sack of Troy* by Polygnotus, *The Centaur Family* by Zeuxis, or the *Aphrodite Anedyomene* of Apelles; the lack is tantalising of any picture attributable to the inspiration of Aetion who was credited with the absolutely momentous discovery of the pictorial possibilities of the infant Eros; or to that of the morbid Aristeides who specialised in such subjects as Canake dying of her incestuous love for her brother or the mortally wounded mother who repels the child from her breast fearing lest blood should be already mingled with her milk; and the paintings at Naples considered to derive from a composition by the Athenian Nicias are too poor to give any impression of the quality of an artist whose skill in colouring statues was esteemed by Praxiteles beyond that of all others.

It has, however, proved possible, with varying degrees of confidence, to identify a number of Campanian paintings, some of them of exceptional beauty, as copies or adaptations of Hellenic originals of a later date than the end of the 4th century. The nobility of the large composition at Naples showing Telephus discovered by Hercules in Arcadia (Plate I) is certainly derived from a Pergamene original. The hieratic lineaments of the symbolic figure of Arcadia, whose numinous dignity in this context may be held to justify her size, and the romantic vigour of the physiognomy of Hercules, with which the traits of the goddess are in effective contrast, recur in a number of Campanian paintings and may denote a special sensibility to the highly organised prestige of Pergamene culture. The art of Pergamum, which was used by the city's rulers as an instrument of kings' aggrandisement was certainly well known in Italy. The representatives of the short-lived Attalid dynasty were political clients of Rome and the numerous embassies which represented their interests with the Senate are known to have included artists in their train. It may be supposed that it was an unknown Pergamene artist who was the first to perceive the æsthetic significance of the Noble Savage in the ruthless but pathetic valour with which the barbarian Gauls defended their primitive hearths against the victorious force of the Pergamene dynasty, and the source of those surviving statues of Gallic warriors, which include the Ludovisi group and are said to include the Dying Gaul, can be shown to be of Pergamene origin. The rugged solemnity of the figure of Hercules in the Campanian painting may be a trait inherited from the same individual inspiration. Its influence, or at least the influence of Pergamum, is equally apparent in the combination of rugosity with ritualistic gravity which inspires the picture (also at Naples) of Chiron teaching Hercules to play the lyre (Plate II).

Celebrated works by the Greek painter Timomachus of Byzantium, the *Medea* and the *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Plate III) are thought, with some assurance, to have been the source of a group of copies or adaptations preserved at Naples. Timomachus, who was a contemporary of Cæsar, was also, as far as we know, the last painter to be acknowledged as a master in the classic style. The most impressive of the extant copies is the large *Iphigenia in Tauris* which, despite its imperfect condition, reveals a powerful, schematic composition and carries traces, notably in the bound figures of Pylades and Orestes and in the gigantic stature of the priestess, of a truly monumental quality in the prototype.

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THE number of paintings which may be connected, with some show of reason, with Hellenic originals of any period, though it is not confined to the examples considered here, remains slight. The study of Greek painting is still one in which divination plays a prominent part, and the soothsayers have not always observed that Delphic caution which the subject requires. The derivative character of the available material, however, might be established, if other evidence was wanting, on stylistic grounds alone, and these have provided the foundation for conjecture of a more judicious kind. Among the paintings of which we know nothing from external sources are the unique series preserved on the walls of the Villa Item with which visitors to Pompeii may be assumed to be familiar. These are certainly among the most beautiful of all the paintings which have come down to us from classical antiquity, though their probably remarkable significance remains unproven. Their subject, it is now generally agreed, is a Dionysiac initiation rite, the progress of which is depicted as a continuous narrative, though the purely decorative compartments into which the background is divided faintly indicate the successive phases of the ceremony. The manner in which the theme has been interpreted, the absence of any hint of Bacchic frenzy, the attitudes of the participants in the rite, and the element of stasis in the drapery of their garments—such features, in combination, suggest that these are paintings by an artist in the classic style if they are not actual adaptations from some classic model. The remarkable colour scheme, festal and at the same time almost forbidding, favours the same assumption. Much has been said about the information supplied by Pliny that the 4th-century painters in many cases employed a palette restricted to black, red, yellow, and white, a method which might also be employed by Hellenistic artists, for whom its usage was sanctified by tradition. Ernst Pfuhl, whose *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen* remains the most comprehensive account of the subject, takes the view that bright blues and greens were unobtainable by the artists who adopted this technique. Experiment shows, however, that black, red, yellow, and white, combined in the right manner, will produce blues and greens not only of great brightness, but also of peculiar sweetness. The quality of the cool colours in the paintings at the Villa Item provokes the assumption that they were obtained in this way. If this was in fact so, the probability that their author was a painter in the classic style would be greatly strengthened, and the possibility that other paintings exhibiting the same colour peculiarities could be shown to have been painted in accordance with the same ancient procedure would clarify our uncertain vision of the specific characteristics of the 4th-century artists. Whatever the results of this line of inquiry might be, the impression remains difficult to resist that in the paintings at the Villa Item is discernible some faint but authentic perlustration of the famous virtues of the classic masters. Our mental picture of what these were is in some measure conditioned by a work which is unfortunately not a painting but which is an undisputed copy of a recorded example of Greek painting prior to the death of Alexander; this is the heroic representation, in a mosaic of more than half a million tesseræ, of the fateful confrontation of the Hellenic conqueror and Darius at the battle of Issus. The original picture by the 4th-century artist, Philoxenus, was well known in the Hellenistic era, and the penetrating note of historic tension conveyed in the reproduction—a note to which the medium of mosaic is not naturally attuned—must be an echo of a still more compelling power in the model.

CONSIDERATION of the Alexander mosaic, together with the paintings at the Villa Item, the copies after Timomachus, and the pictures produced under the influence of Pergamum where the classic masters, notwithstanding the energetic singularity of Pergamene culture, inspired peculiar veneration, reveals—if the expression is not too strong—the proverbial character of the classic style in its loftier flights: man exalted to the limits but not beyond the limits of nature is its subject; gods and demi-gods assume the human condition, and the aspect of the Homeric hero is not eclipsed by that of Mars. The superhuman stature which is an occasional attribute of divine or otherwise sacred personages may reflect the piety of an age less prone to deify its leaders,

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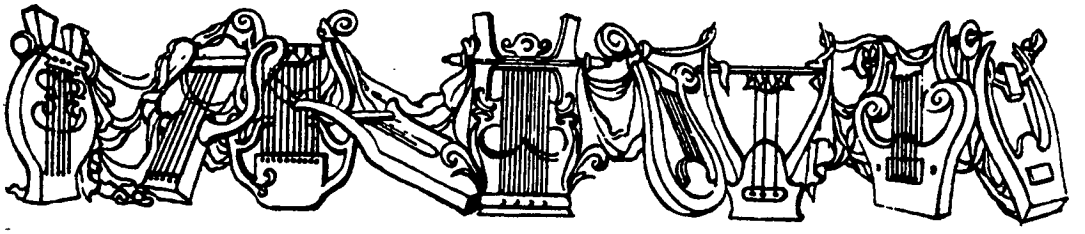
and denote the influence of the earliest classic masters. To the contemporaries of Alexander it may easily have seemed irrational to visualise the hero as a less imposing figure than the inhabitants of Olympus, and the innate tendency of Greek artists to equate the human and the divine was increasingly flattered from the 4th century onwards, though the value of the equation as the symbol of a god-like element in man was gradually reversed. To the mind of the 4th-century artist, its original implications were fully present, and the human form, transfigured, but not transmuted, by a sacred spark, acquired a tyrannical dignity in his imagination which may at times have been served at the expense of pictorial considerations. The composition of the figures in certain extant Campanian paintings amounts almost to a usurpation of the picture space, but the infelicitous effect may be due to the deficiency of copyists, and the testimony of the pictures specifically considered here, supported by the evidence of the other arts and of literature, is enough to show that the 4th-century painters were the masters of a heroic style in which the flesh and spirit of humanity were invested with hieratic eminence, and whose purpose would have been profaned, if it had not been pursued in the strictest dependency, however eclectic, on the natural aspects of men and women.

It seems likely that this style matured in the earlier years of the century. The improvement of illusionist techniques for the representation of inanimate nature must have diminished, from a merely plastic point of view, the preponderant rôle of the human figure in pictorial composition and relaxed the demands of the epic Muse. There are numerous pictures of lyric inspiration in the collection at Naples which reveal nothing of that formal calculation of monumental effect apparent, for example, in the paintings based on Timomachus' *Iphigenia*, but which may, nevertheless, be credited with some noble though anonymous descent. To the educated taste of the Hellenistic world it seemed that of all painters Apelles was the paragon (we must wish that he had also been the phœnix), and numbers of Hellenistic artists may have lost their identity in his shadow. In his lifetime, his person was rendered remote by the extent of the honours showered upon it, and a fabulous perfection was ascribed to his artistry in an age whose legendary fabric seems also to have been the fabric of truth. His genius might be embodied in the form of Charis in whose plurality of being the three Graces were enclosed and who had once been the wife of a youthful Hephaestus. With some idea of the evergreen, numerose Charis as a guide, the impulse may be uncontrollable to make a vain search among the likely material pausing fruitlessly before the *Ariadne on Naxos* or *The Endymion and Selene*, for some trace of Apelles' inspiration. Of this "cresset shaken from the constellations" no living spark remains. But since it still burnt brightly in the Augustan age, at the moment when Campanian art, as we know it, was produced, imagination may be allowed to qualify as, in the vaguest sense, Apelline, that pervasive emanation which absorbs the eye on a first view of the collections at Naples, the aura, as it might be, of an "air-feeding" Hygeia, flaked with hyaline and gold and suffused with the immanence of the Graces.



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DISCUSSION

Portrait of the "Artist" as an Angry Young Gentleman

"And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death."

I FIND it irresistible to respond to ENCOUNTER's generous invitation to comment on the pieces contributed to its October number by the Angry Young Gentlemen. Living in the country, and largely in the past, I have not seen their plays or read their books; but I judge from what I have heard that both of them are highly successful young gentlemen. And on reading the excerpts from their essays given in ENCOUNTER, I wonder what they are angry about. Mr. Tynan writes good, cogent English (his style strikes me as a good deal more taut than Osborne's, and I would judge his intellect to be superior); and the inartistic society against which they are both protesting is apparently affording them a very good living. I can only conclude that what they really need is not several columns of the valuable space of ENCOUNTER, but several hours on a psychiatrist's couch. I have never read two articles so instinct with self-advertised inferiority. The Germans have a saying that "the trees do not grow up to the sky"; but no one in his sane mind could postulate any ceiling to the prodigiously burgeoning chips on the shoulders of these two young gentlemen.

Mr. Christopher Hollis, in an admirable article entitled "Keeping Up With the Rices" (*The Spectator*, 18 October, 1957), has already made a savoury dish of kedgeree out of Mr. Osborne, and by implication out of Mr. Tynan. A few additional remarks are perhaps worth making about the former young gentleman.

Mr. Osborne, at the beginning of his piece in ENCOUNTER, disclaims any serious process of ratiocination. He is not, he proclaims, an intellectual, but an "artist"; his real job is making people *feel*. In that case, it would seem that the essay form is one unsuited, *ex hypothesi*, to his talents. It is really rather insolent to grab an intelligent reader by the lapel and then preface one's remarks by an admission that one has, after all, nothing intelligible to say:

"I have dreaded writing this piece. If I were ever capable of doing it, I am not capable of doing it now. Months ago some kind of weakness or vanity made me agree to contribute to this book. But I have procrastinated to the point of downright bad manners until I am now the only writer in this symposium who has not delivered his copy. They are all—apparently—waiting for me. I do not relish having to address myself to what is almost certain to be a self-conscious literary mob, people who write sneering, parochial stuff in the week-end reviews. I can't solve anybody else's problems, least of all these creatures', collecting their literary cocoa tin lids every week."

Let us briefly consider some of the thoughts which have dripped from Mr. Osborne's pen:

"My objection to the royal symbol is that it is dead; it is the gold filling in a mouthful of decay."

This, of course, is not an attack on the royal symbol, but on the human beings among whom Mr. Osborne has the personal misfortune to reside. It prompts the question, Is it better to be dead or decadent? Much could be argued about this dichotomy. Is not gold better than pyorrhœa?

Then again:

"... the state visits to countries like France and Portugal which successfully fulfil the monarchy function of disguising important political issues—such as the barbarity of the French Government's policy in Algeria, and the openly anti-democratic constitution of Portugal—in a sludge of generalised patriotic feelings."

Both France and Portugal are republics. Mr. Osborne seems unaware of these simple facts. For he writes:

"A socialist party that is not republican is not crediting its potential followers with reason or intelligence."

But it seems from the previous quotation from Mr. Osborne that even when the republic has been achieved, the "barbarity," and an "anti-democratic constitution" may still be prevalent in sludge.

If it is so terrible for the Queen, on the advice of her Ministers, to visit Portugal (our oldest ally), why does it go unremarked by Mr. Osborne when a much more savage dictator than Dr. Salazar, Khrushchev (who rules over a country with which

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we have no alliance), has tea with the Queen at Windsor?

"As for the ship launchings, the visits to 'establishments,' the polo games, the night-clubs with well-bred nobodies," . . .
[would it be better if the Royal Family were coerced into accepting escorts who were ill-bred somebodies?]

. . . *"the T.V. appearances, the endless concentration at the racecourse, the Christmas Day set-cant: are these the crowning interests of a rich, healthy culture?"*

As the psalmist twanged: "They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy.
There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

WHY shouldn't people in a free world play polo if they want to, and can afford to? Isn't it rather snobbish to complain that members of the Royal Family sometimes associate with people who are not celebrities? The launching of ships is not, in fact, it may be observed in passing, exclusively confined to members of the Royal Family. I regret my lack of information on this topic, but I am unable to report in what sports, indoor or outdoor, Mr. Osborne himself indulges or excels; but even if they were markedly anti-social, I really don't think I would write to the newspapers to complain about his forms of recreation. I like to think that Mr. Osborne has a happy private life of his own, but whether it be happy or unhappy, it would be presumptuous for strangers like myself to intrude upon it. Not so Mr Osborne. So far he has been good enough to refrain from prescribing what games I ought or ought not to play, what pastimes I myself should be allowed to indulge in, or be discouraged from indulging in. So far his plaint only applies to the Royal Family; but where will this process end? Very good humble men in cloth caps may soon find themselves deprived of their whippets by these Angry Young Gentlemen, and, for all I know, they may join with Prince Jean de Faucigny-Lucinge in barring Lady Docker from the Casino in Monte Carlo, and perhaps have their faces slapped for their pains.

Mr. Osborne suffered, I believe, a good deal of intrusion from the press at the time of his recent marriage. One might have hoped that his own disagreeable experience might have led him to have a chivalrous regard for the Queen's privacy.

Her Majesty is currently under attack for not appearing on television as often as Mr. Muggeridge used to. But, for Mr. Osborne, she has already lost her public in the very brief and fugitive appearances she has so far made.

"It bores me, it distresses me that there should be so many empty minds, so many empty lives in Britain to sustain this fatuous industry [the Royal *Family*]*; that no one should have had the wit to laugh it into extinction, or the honesty to resist it."*

Is this a well-written sentence? Is it witty? Does it fill empty minds? Does it laugh anything into extinction? One could go on till the bears mate with the squirrels asking similar questions about this particular piece of anger.

As far as I am informed, neither the Queen nor the Home Secretary has yet thought it necessary to interfere in any way with Mr. Osborne's private activities. In the free English world in which he seems to find it so disagreeable to live, he has just got married, without anyone attempting to intrude upon his private happiness. Chuck it, Osborne, chuck it. I don't mean your marriage, naturally not. But has it not occurred to you that your busy-bodying activities might interfere with other people who have a right to seek happiness in their own way, without you, and the *Daily Mirror*, the *People*, the *Sunday Pictorial*, Mr. Muggeridge, Lord Altrincham, and Mr. John Gordon pontificating about them?

It is sometimes said as a reproach against the British people that they think that the world "owes them a living." It almost seems as if the Angry Young Gentlemen feel that the world owes them grievances, which in their ineptitude they have not so far been able to discover or postulate for themselves. And that in their psychological disquietude they have picked upon the Queen who, after all, is fair game for Angry Young Gentlemen. She is a sitting bird. How sludgy can you be?

We need not waste so much time on Mr. Tynan, abler though he is than Mr. Osborne.

Consider two extracts from Mr. Tynan's piece:

'. . . *Your attitude towards your native land . . . should be governed by a gracious old concept, redolent of all that was best in medievalism. Recently refurbished by Mr. Waugh, it is called the concept of precedence. "There is a single line," he has written, "extending from Windsor to Wormwood Scrubs of individuals all justly and precisely graded. . . ."*'

'. . . *I would recall to your mind a remark made two years ago by Anthony Nutting, when Khrushchev and Bulganin were in India. . . . B. and K., he said, having been turned down at the front door, had gone round to the back. India, that is to say, was the tradesmen's entrance. I am not sure where the Jews stand in the Great Chain of Being; so many of them are so obstinately classless; . . .*'

This is Mr. Tynan's representation of Mr. Nutting's opinions. I wonder why Mr. Tynan dragged the Jews in? So far as I know, Mr. Nutting, of whom I have scarcely more knowledge than I have of Mr. Tynan, has never said anything derogatory about the Jews. But the phrase "Chain of Being" seems to indicate that it is Mr. Waugh and not Mr. Nutting whose words are being distorted in this irrelevant fashion as fuel for Mr. Tynan's ire.

But what has Mr. Waugh ever said against the Jews? We all know that, like many Jews and Gentiles, he is not a Zionist; but I have never previously heard him accused, directly or indirectly, of anti-Semitism. Of course, particularly for intellectuals, it is often a useful trick to accuse your opponents of anti-Semitism without producing any evidence. How angry and dishonest can you be?

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Mr. Tynan is a very clever young gentleman. I find it hard to believe that he could have involved himself and his readers in such an intellectual confusion by accident.

In fact, what Mr. Tynan is inviting his readers to believe—if words have any meaning—is that all right-wing opinion in Britain can be summed up in two phrases torn from their contexts (one without attribution) from Mr. Nutting and Mr. Waugh. The first of these two middle-aged gentlemen (both of whom have given up being as angry as they used to be) has retired from politics, while the latter has never intruded himself into the political arena.

If these Angry Young Gentlemen had a legitimate grievance against the world by which they have been so lushly suckled, I would have expected them to attack Mr. Macmillan or Mr. Cousins, Mr. Khrushchev or President Eisenhower, or Mr. Thorneycroft or Mr. Bevan; for these are the men who seek to dominate the world in which they live. Instead, these angry young gentlemen have chosen to attack the people whom Mr. Macmillan would be least likely to send in to bat for the Conservative Party—Mr. Waugh and Mr. Nutting. And they call it cricket.

*

"Then, said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou has not laboured, neither madest it grow; which come up in a night, and perished in a night:

And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Randolph S. Churchill

Whom have you forgotten?

A few days only to Christmas, and the chances are that you still haven't completed your Christmas shopping. Fortunately there is a quick and easy solution. For the special price of 15s. ($3.00) for six months or 27s. ($6.00) for a year we will send ENCOUNTER, post free, to your friends anywhere in the world.

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LETTERS

Mr. Anderson and Admass

In your current number—and also in the book Declaration Mr. Lindsay Anderson writes:

"...Artists and intellectuals who despise the people, imagine themselves superior to them, and think it clever to talk about the 'Ad-Mass' are both cutting themselves off from necessary experience, and shirking their responsibilities...."

The term *Admass*, now in fairly common use among literary journalists, was first coined by me—see the passage headed *New Names* in *Journey Down A Rainbow*. It is not a description of any kind of people but a name given to an economic-industrial-social-cultural system that is American in origin but is now taking over most of the Western world. And I for one mistrust and dislike *Admass*, but this has nothing to do with despising people, cutting oneself off from necessary experience, shirking one's responsibilities.

J. B. Priestley

London, W.1

"Zero and the Impossible"

May I make two points in connection with the article by Martin Seymour-Smith in the November Encounter?

Firstly, to complain that logic and logical analysis are "loveless," "neutralised," and "bleak," is rather like complaining that tennis-courts are hard and flat and hemmed-in by wire-netting.

Secondly, the comments on the work of Ryle and Ayer, at the end of the article, are further depressing evidence of the resentment which is only too often aroused when the irritating force of plain unadorned reasoning clashes with other, more cherished, habits of thought.

G. B. Keene

University of North Staffs.,
Keele, Staffs.

In his article "Zero and the Impossible" (Encounter, November), Mr. Seymour-Smith sets out to consider four very different writers whose only affinity is, as he himself admits, "this sad coincidence" of their recent death. In order to avoid writing four unrelated pieces, he poses a criterion for good writing, in the light of which he will consider each of them. This criterion is their ability to devise "a poetic language... in which it is possible to communicate an apprehension of reality." Yet when the turn of Joyce Cary comes, Mr. Seymour-Smith says that "We should be unwise... to make a serious attempt to assess the degree of his creative intelligence." His condemnation of Cary does not then rest on Cary's failure to measure up to the set standard, for the measurement is never made. There is no attempt to assess the quality of his prose, to examine his success in communicating an "apprehension of reality." Rather does Mr. Seymour-Smith concern himself with the question of the validity of Cary's reality. Such a concern is, in fact, more appropriate to the work of a novelist than is a pre-occupation with linguistic analysis. Yet having reached the right path apparently by accident, Mr. Seymour-Smith seems to stumble along it, without seeing where it leads him.

In the first place, he criticises what he terms Cary's "Anti-moralistic" outlook. By this, he seems to mean the failure of Cary's characters to see any conflict between their own actions, and some objective standard of morality which they recognise. Gully Jimson has no other standard of conduct than his need to express himself as an artist, Nimmo no scruples in his power-lust. Each deceives himself in order to justify his own actions. What Mr. Seymour-Smith fails to recognise is that Cary did not deceive himself, nor did he attempt to deceive us. The conflict is there if we wish to see it. He shows us how these people have shirked the conflict. There is no need for us to do so.

More important, he fails to observe Cary's achievement in establishing communication both between us and his characters, and between the characters themselves. Nina's understanding of Nimmo, for instance, is very much greater than she will allow herself to realise. For if she did realise it, her happiness would vanish; such is her superficiality. The same might be said of the dream-world in which Mr. Johnson lives; yet the fact is that these people, far from being uncomplicated, ignore their complexities in order to be able to act. Mr. Seymour-Smith would have us believe that Cary's characters live in an Antinomian world, where nothing matters provided one is saved; where what Cary was in fact doing was trying to resolve, as every novelist does, the dichotomy between freewill and determinism. If his solution appears Antinomian, it is not so much that he comes

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down on the side of determinism, as that he refuses to judge his characters, refuses to admit that anyone would deliberately choose to do evil. It is a case of *"tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner"*; one may judge the outcome of someone's actions, but not the man himself. It is a measure of his success in communication that we are enabled to understand his characters.

Mr. Seymour-Smith finds himself forced to admit that Cary's description of life is accurate: surely there can be no higher praise for a novelist?

I. YASS

Norwich, Norfolk

IT WEARIES me to think that whether or not I write this letter Mr. Martin Seymour-Smith and others like him will continue in their muddleheadedness and misunderstandings of modern philosophy; but just for the record:

I can think of no philosopher, certainly not Professors Ayer or Ryle, who would have the least comprehension of what Mr. Seymour-Smith might mean by the "verifiable statement of modern logic." Sentences in logical calculi are tautologies and a fortiori *neither* statements *nor* verifiable. Logicians who are building "artificial languages" (again neither Professors Ryle or Ayer belong to this group) are not in competition with poets as is implied. They are but investigating the properties of mathematical systems which is a legitimate branch of knowledge whether or not it is "a gormless complement of poetic language."

But when Mr. Seymour-Smith tells us that "logical analysis performs the useful function of demonstrating the unverifiability, or plain wrongness of almost everything we say or take for granted," then I but gasp at such silliness and ask him to choose some other, and not so patently absurd a way to pad his article.

KENNETH STERN

London, W.11

IT IS not uncommon to find an argument refuted on the grounds on which it is put forth. But seldom has this been done more obviously than by Mr. Seymour-Smith (November issue) when he equates philosophy with poetry in a somewhat muddled epistomological theory. This attempt was not only superfluous to his article, it was superfluous in a befuddled and harmful way.

The demand from a poem that it be "... a description of an experience of the 'truth' ... so exact that it is immediately communicable ..." seems to imply that Mr. Smith regards poetry as the essense of philosophical inquiry, or further, that it is the result of infallible intuitions of the nature which permit him to know that "Poetic statements are nearer to reality itself than those 'useful' assertions which appear to be purely factual, but which logical analysis rightly shows are not necessarily true."

Indeed, if he could convince us that he is in possession of knowledge of "reality itself," then logic would be abandoned for a more comprehensive system of rhyme and rhythm. But I hesitate to vouch for a philosophical system which would reveal even the tentative hypothesis that

"The noonday azure strumming all its rays
Sang that a famous battle had been won."

His equation of philosophical and poetic statements leads to odd deductions. A strange perspective, indeed, that admits that "logical analysis performs the useful function of demonstrating the unverifiability, or plain wrongness, of almost everything we say ..." leaving only "... a series of 'verifiable' statements ... characterised by the essentially trivial nature of the sense which these statements actually contain." If this were in fact true, then it would follow that poetic *utterances* (or as Mr. Smith would have it, *assertions*) which, being "a description of an experience of the 'truth' ..." would, in fact, be verifiable and hence "essentially trivial" ....

ROBIN SANBORN

Department of Philosophy
Universität Wien
Vienna, Austria

"Back to the Mines"

TO THE sad fate of Milovan Djilas there is much to be said (ENCOUNTER, October issue), but perhaps one small literary footnote might be added, for I was reminded of the ancient Greek tale of Philoxenos. When Philoxenos poured scorn on the poems of the tyrant Dionysos, he was sentenced to slave labour in the mines. Some time later he was again asked to listen to the verse of the tyrant. But he did not listen for long, and turned to go. Dionysos asked him where he was going, and Philoxenos replied, "Back to the mines. ..."

MELVIN J. LASKY

Berlin

Polish Post

FURTHER to the report in your department, "From the Other Shore" (November) that books and journals sent from abroad do not reach addresses in Poland. The local G.P.O. is in receipt of a directive POC 31.7.57 which says that "No documents ... printed matter, books, sketches ... etc., may be sent by post if they contain matter prejudicial to Polish laws and customs."

For the record, friends in Poland have not received any magazines sent after July, 1957, though they were received before that date throughout 1957. These magazines, which presumably "contain matter prejudicial to Polish laws and customs," were *Woman, Woman's Own, Mickey Mouse Weekly, Robin, Playbox,* and *Tarzan Comics.*

H. G. WILLIAMS

Newbury, Berkshire

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Innocence and Politics

MR. Dwight Macdonald* is, as we all know, a man with a past: a past that he resought and captured for our delight only a few months ago in these columns, in a series of articles distinguished by their wit, their incisiveness, their high intelligent drollery. For ten years or more, it seems, Mr. Macdonald lived at the centre—if so amorphous a terrain may be said to have a centre—of American left-wing intellectual life. He worked for, and broke with, the *Nation*, the *New International*, *Partisan Review*: he had controversies with James B. Cannon, with Burnham, with Trotsky: he learnt to distinguish (as one might in an examination be asked to distinguish) between the Fieldites and the Stammites, the Oehlerites and the Marlenites: he was himself liberal, fellow-traveller, Trotskyite, ex-Trotskyite, anarchist, pacifist by turn.

"There it is," was how he concluded his articles, "and there I am." But some time before this the reader must have suspected—perhaps from that unusual mixture of extravagant unsolemnity and a sort of muted nostalgia which defines the Macdonald style—that there was something "a bit different" about this particular revolutionist's attitude to his radical years. For he writes about them in none of the accepted manners, not as a criminal about his past, nor as a grown-up about his childhood, but most, perhaps, like a traveller about his travels. He doesn't protest that he couldn't possibly think how he'd ever brought himself to do what he did, nor does he tell us how he would do it all over again if he had the chance: his attitude seems rather to be that he wouldn't do it again, certainly, but because and just because he has already done it once. Radicalism seems to have been for Mr. Macdonald what might in the broadest sense of the word be called an adventure: and adventures done are adventures finished with. To draw a parallel: Macdonald may be said to have been a radical in much the same way as Orwell was a down-and-out. Force of circumstances, the spirit of the age, a taste for experience, a deep discontent with things as they are, all must have conspired and worked together to impel him on his route: but in the whole concatenation of contributory conditions there was, I think, nothing that corresponded directly to his own inner nature or essence. Macdonald has proved himself to be a man who can be a radical: but there is nothing to suggest that he is a man who must be a radical. Above all, nothing in this collection of his radical writings.

What Macdonald is, is (if we want labels) an Innocent. And while an Innocent is very likely to resemble a Radical in that he also will feel a profound discontent with established society, he is sharply to be distinguished from the Radical in the source or ground of his discontent. For whereas the Radical is the man who, armed with certain principles, inspired by a certain vision of the world, confronts society as it is and tries to see it in terms of these principles, of this vision, the Innocent is the man who confronts society as it is and tries to see it—as it is. Ordinarily, in the Innocent's message, our eyes look out on the world clouded by convention, prejudice, deceit, by comfortable lying beliefs and theories, by the whole horrible spawn of hypocrisy and self-interest and self-importance, and so it is not surprising that we see it as we want it to be, the faults all on *their* side, the good all on *ours*. If, however, we want to be sane in politics, we must make an effort of the will, and tear away the blinkers, the filters, the distorting lenses of belief and custom, and see things cleaned down, close up, raw.

It is of just this kind of vision that *The Responsibility of Peoples* (for the most part a collection of articles from Macdonald's own periodical *Politics*) offers us page after page. In every essay he brings us up short in front of some famous happening belonging to the recent past but already enshrined in history, stares very hard at it, and the Emperor's clothes fall away. In consequence, this book is undoubtedly one of the liveliest examples of contemporary political writing: in its pages—clever, paradoxical, ingenious, passionate—vitality itself seems to take on new life. If here and there the trick doesn't work, this is of course in the fugitive nature of the *genre*: the subject-matter just happens to be too remote, too irrelevant for us, here, now, to care either way. But I think that whenever in reading the book I found that I was not moved by a particular piece, I also found myself wishing that I had read the piece at the time, when I could and did care.

The point about the Innocent could be put, one might think, by saying that he tries everywhere, at all points, to substitute direct, for indirect,

* *The Responsibility of Peoples and Other Essays in Political Criticism*. By DWIGHT MACDONALD. Victor Gollancz. 21s. net.

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LONGMANS

writing about politics. But once put it in this way and one sees, I suggest, something about the true nature, and hence something about the effective limitations, of the Innocent's method. For to call a way of writing "direct" suggests that in contrast to other ways it leads us straight to the heart of things, it provides us with the material on which and on which alone the uncorrupted judgment can be based. But this is supremely what the Innocent's method cannot do for us—in politics, at any rate. For in politics the trouble is that the issues are so big, so complicated, so vertiginous, that with no theory or principle to support or direct us, we find it just impossible to weigh up one against another, to allot marks between them, to take sides over them. Take, for instance, a theme that runs through much of this book (and incidentally provides it with its title): that we should set against the victims of German concentration-camps and mass-extermination, the victims of the atom-bomb, of the mass air raids on Germany, of Stalin's internal programmes, of Allied colonialism. By all means, let us. But when we do, it is, I think, singularly unclear what follows. To arrive at anything like a comparative judgment on the matter, the bare facts or our raw vision of them do not suffice: before we can graduate from being horrified to being also discriminating spectators of the world we live in, we need to entertain some vision of society as it should be, some theory of how it works, some general estimate of what outweighs what and where things lead. And what is true even in these extreme cases, where the facts for a moment appear to cry out for judgment upon them, is truer still when we come to the weighing-up of programmes and policies, to an opinion, say, upon the New Deal or the Welfare State. In such cases, we run the risk of either having no opinion at all or having a quite arbitrary opinion (Mr. Macdonald, incidentally, must be the only intelligent person in mid-20th-century politics to be converted from pacifism by —the Berlin air-lift). The Innocent, deprived of all the cues that theory and ideology alone can give him, is ultimately forced back upon his immediate reaction, upon unaided feeling. The method that set out to introduce new standards of objectivity into politics, ends up as the apotheosis of subjectivity. In politics the Innocent is *au fond* the Aesthete.

And of political æstheticism there is some evidence in this book. Take, for instance, Macdonald's hostility to "Lib-Labism." I defy anyone to say what he has against it, save that it is drab. He, it is true, accuses it of leaving out of politics all the really important issues: but of course he really knows better than to think that "child-bearing and sex and art" have been

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pushed out of the political arena by a conspiracy of shallow Libs and philistine Labs: the truth is that, for better or for worse, they have never been in it. Or again take the hostility to Science and Progress. Of course if you do not take into account the gradual alleviation of suffering, of disease, of want, the advance of technology means no more than the "look of modernity"—the manufacture of bombs, the destruction of the countryside, the homogenisation of cultures—all hideous, rough, destructive things. To admire science and technology is, as Condorcet saw, to take the long view: and the æsthete is by definition he who takes the short view.

Mr. Macdonald, facing the modern world, is like a man at a party. He is unimpressed by names, by reputations, by the whole honorific paraphernalia. Time is short, and impressions crowd in. So he judges people (as one does) by their looks, their manner, the modulations of the voice, the ability to show warmth. And if occasionally by these means a mistake is made and someone is dismissed with no good reason, the chances are that the same mistake will not be made by all and that for everyone there is someone to like him. And even if there isn't, ultimately no injustice is done. For we do not aim, glass in hand, to dole out friendship in accordance with the principles of distributive justice. Social life relates not to justice but to pleasure: it is not, on any level, a system of outdoor relief. But this, in my opinion, is precisely, is supremely what politics is.

None of this detracts from the merit, as I have endeavoured to state it, of Mr. Macdonald's book. My point is merely that, contrary to what at first sight might seem to be the case, "direct" political writing in the Macdonald style cannot be a primary, but must always be a secondary, phenomenon in political literature. It has a value, an enormous value, but this lies always in its capacity to cure the vision of some current malady, to correct it in respect of some given and familiar deviation. To go back again, for instance, to Macdonald on the Germans. Nothing he says allows us to form for ourselves a final opinion on the matter: but what he does for us (and, most important, would have done for us at the time if only we had read him) is to counteract all that nauseating, poisonous rubbish about national character, once in free circulation, which was supposed to prove to us, to our smug satisfaction, that "such things couldn't happen here." In the theory of politics, as in the theory of painting, the notion of the "innocent eye," taken literally, is a vicious abstraction: for all that is true is that one can rid the eye of this sophistication, or of that. But of course in the practice of both subjects there are times when that is enough.

Accordingly, to the reader who detects in his political views or reasoning any tendency to rationalise his own interests, to gloss over his own imperfections, to find impartiality "boring," this book will be of value: in other words, no one can claim to have outgrown it.

Richard Wollheim

An Act of Resignation

On Poetry and Poets. By T. S. Eliot. *Faber.* 21s.

This is a depressing book. Only the shadow of a great authority remains, and perhaps it is possible to see why the substance has gone.

Poets have been the most philosophical critics of poetry, when they reflect upon the ambitions of their own art and therefore upon the place of art in experience. Most modern criticism in English begins with Mr. Eliot and *The Sacred Wood*. It has been the rule that great poets should look for their own æsthetic principles, and that they should become to this extent philosophers, or borrowers of philosophy. It is a romantic fallacy—the fallacy of pure art and of pure inspiration—that creative imagination and abstract, philosophical thought are naturally opposed faculties of the mind, the one necessarily inhibiting the other. Rather there is an impression of shallowness and flimsiness, of a dimension missing, in the work of poets who had evidently not thought deeply about their own æsthetic principles, and about the relation of art to morality. Mr. Eliot, and many others also, have sometimes found Tennyson comparatively uninteresting as a poet, partly because he had no tested æsthetic philosophy of his own. His poetry has seemed too much an immediate expression of a particular temperament, and therefore he does not seem to make any assertion that is of very general and permanent interest. It is one of the canons of greatness, which Mr. Eliot often mentions, that a great poet is a man of comprehensive intelligence consciously exercised towards discovering the importance of poetry itself in a whole moral or religious scheme: Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Goethe, Schiller, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Yeats, Valéry, finding the place of modern poetry in relation to modern knowledge and conditions of life.

Is poetry now only a superior decoration of experience, a free enjoyment of the resources of language without further responsibility? Mr. Auden recently gave some part of his opinion in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. Mr. Eliot has more than once returned to the related question—how seriously must one

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take the thought and the beliefs of a poet if one is to understand and enjoy his poetry? This raises almost every issue of æsthetics, and there is, I think, only one great work written around this theme by a modern poet: Schiller's *Letters on Aesthetic Education*. Schiller used Kant's philosophy as a framework and expressed his own ambitions and experience within it. Although there may be echoes of F. H. Bradley in *Notes towards a Definition of Culture*, Mr. Eliot has always avoided philosophical argument, and appealed only to his own strong and original experience. But in these collected essays and addresses all the famous sharpness of observation has disappeared without trace, except in the reprinted introduction to *A Choice of Kipling's Verse*. The tone is that of a sensible, unpretending, humorous, Christian gentleman, who is not to be taken in by theories and by intellectual enthusiasms, who cites the classics and who certainly has his favourites, but who also wants to be fair to everybody, including even Milton, in the calm and resignation of a school prize-giving. The result is an urbane flow of apparent contradictions and evasions.

In the most substantial chapter in the book, the lecture on "Johnson as Critic and Poet," Mr. Eliot defends Johnson for attaching importance to edification in poetry—"Edification is not a separable addition to a poem, it is organically essential to it; we do not have two experiences, one of pleasure and one of edification: it is one experience which we analyse into constituents." And elsewhere—"We are all of course influenced in our degree of attraction to any work of art by our sympathy with, and antipathy towards, the ideas as well as the personality of the author." Then comes the surprising statement—"We endeavour, and in our time must endeavour, to discount the attraction or revulsion, in order to arrive at a just evaluation of the artistic merit." The reason is—"If we were agreed as to what we meant by wisdom, by the good life for the individual and for society, we should apply moral judgments to poetry as confidently as did Johnson... Johnson was in a position, as no critic of equal stature has been since, to write purely *literary* criticism, because he was able to assume that there was a general attitude towards life, and a common opinion as to the place of poetry in it." Suppose that one accepts the assumption that there was a settled orthodoxy in Johnson's England, which was more secure and unquestioned than the orthodoxy of liberal opinion to-day: the argument is still unintelligible. Why should I try to discount in the act of judgment the moral ideas and attitudes conveyed in a poem, merely because others in my society may not share my moral outlook? The making of a judgment has a point particularly when the criteria of judgment are disputed, and when the poem is, among other things, a test of the moral standpoint from which it is judged. Only if there is an unchallenged moral orthodoxy, can judgment be restricted to that thin abstraction, "literary merit," because there is nothing else that calls for an expression of opinion; everything deeper is already known and is simply recognised as either heresy or truth.

Writing about Vergil as a classic and Goethe as a sage, Mr. Eliot himself says that it is for the sake of learning wisdom, a just and comprehensive view of experience, that we must frequent these men: in contrast to "Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Meredith: their philosophy of life came to seem to me flimsy, their religious foundations insecure...." "I can imagine them as greater poets if they had held a different view of life." This strikingly true statement is incompatible with the ideal of purely literary criticism, and so also is Mr. Eliot's argument that poetry, in preserving and extending the power and purity of a language, is extending the power and purity of a people's feelings. Why then does not Mr. Eliot speak plainly for edification, as Johnson did, when edification is linked with poetic pleasure, and denounce its opposite, explaining how he distinguishes edification from its opposite in the domain of feeling? He would then be suggesting an æsthetic philosophy, tested by examples and arising from his own intelligent poetic practice, like the great poets before him.

I think that the reason is that he now half accepts, and half rejects, the liberal-romantic idea that there can be many different just and comprehensive views of experience, each more or less perfectly conveyed, each internally convincing; he half-believes that the value of poetry, taken as a whole, in any one reader's experience, lies largely in the range and opposition of these evidences, and in the constant *extension* of the language of feeling available to him. Criticising Kipling, Mr. Eliot remarks—"We can only judge what we understand, and we must constantly dine with the opposition." But he also looks for a restored Christian orthodoxy, within which poets and their readers are never disturbed in their deep and shared convictions, and which would encourage poets to cultivate "artistic" merit in illustrating the accepted, permanent truths. Then artists, and particularly poets, would have fewer pretensions as discoverers, and we should know that the true classics are those who, as perfect artisans do not fall into heresy. He has not made a choice between the two philosophies; but he has rather quietly resigned from the argument that he himself had renewed and inspired in the 1920's and '30's.

Stuart Hampshire

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American Ambiguities

The Jacksonian Persuasion. By MARVIN MEYERS. Stanford University Press. $5. (London: Oxford University Press, probably 40s.)

ALL OUR efforts to relate ourselves to tradition, to our sources and our origins, are inevitably ambiguous. We look back while marching forward; and march back while looking ahead. On the basis of an appeal to some "original" custom, text, or authority, we make our revolutions and reformations. And if, as has been the case in our own epoch, we may seek a revolution that will mark an end to the tyranny of tradition itself, we find ourselves engaged in a fundamentalist reaction. In America, where the origins are so close at hand, and where a profound piety toward the past combines with a restless urge for innovation, the ambiguities are constant and countless. There is only *one* American political tradition, and every political movement must obtain its sanction, invoking the same memories, the same names, the same archetypal images, even the very same quotations. Jefferson is the patron saint of zealous liberals and vigilant McCarthyites, of northern progressives and southern racists—in his humanitarianism, his agrarianism, his detestation of cities, his suspicion of Big Government, his owning of slaves and his dim view of slavery as an institution, there is sufficient sustenance for all. America is the country where opposites are always colliding, interpenetrating, changing sides—where the ethereal Emerson and the gentle Thoreau were enthusiastic admirers of that blood-mad assassin, John Brown; where William Jennings Bryan led the "progressive" assault against economic privilege and the teaching of Darwinism in public schools; where a Governor Faubus, in his youth a socialist and always a New Dealer, becomes the spokesman of the "know-nothing" rabble. There is, of course, some demagogy in all this; but there is even more sincerity. That is what makes for such a fantastic tangle.

The movement known as Jacksonian democracy has a special place in American history because it was the first to be implicated in this ambiguous relation to tradition, and in the process created party politics in the United States as we have known it ever since. Only a generation or so removed from the founding fathers, it was both near enough to experience the full weight of their authority and remote enough to be self-conscious about its relation to it. The Jacksonians found themselves enmeshed in what Professor Marvin Meyers calls the "Jacksonian paradox," and which he defines as follows:

"... *The fact that the movement which helped to clear the path for laissez-faire capitalism and its culture in America, and the public which in its daily life eagerly entered on that path, held nevertheless in their political conscience an ideal of a chaste republican order, resisting the seductions of risk and novelty, greed and extravagance, rapid motion and complex dealings.*"

Professor Meyers' book is part of a reaction among American historians to the view of Jackson—expressed most notably in Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s *The Age of Jackson*—as in effect a previous incarnation of Franklin D. Roosevelt, a liberal leader of the frontier republic. Ever since Senator McCarthy stirred up the Populist embers, and one was reminded that democratic-patriotic-radicalism in America is a thing of many colours, there has been an increasing reluctance among the intellectual class to bend the knee before bold Old Romans like Jackson who could peremptorily reject the common law ("judge-made law") in the name of the common man. On the other hand, Professor Meyers does not allow his revisionism to be reduced to mere reaction. His mind is beautifully poised, sensitive to every complexity, and—a real novelty in American historiography—his book is written with high literary distinction. It pre-

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sents to us Jacksonian democracy in its bewildering plenitude, but with a shrewd lucidity that enables us always to take a bearing. And he strikes the finest of balances in his judgment:

"In one form or another, the Jacksonian persuasion has been a perennially powerful strain in American life. It has much to answer for, but also much to claim. In its moment of dominance, it has often obscured political choices for the American people; it has fixed thought on oversimplified dichotomies, moralised where it should have judged, encouraged an ungenerous fundamentalism. And yet the very faults of the persuasion as a guide to prudent statesmanship may have been its strength as a call to justice. For a society inevitably committed to maximising economic gains, this persuasion in its various forms has been the great effective force provoking men to ask what their nation ought to be...."

One of the most fruitful of Professor Meyers' insights is contained in the title. The word "persuasion," which he defines as "a half-formulated moral perspective involving emotional commitment," hits off exactly the strange destiny of ideas in American politics. Parties do not have anything so formal as an ideology, but they do—and must—profess something more explicit than a general ethos. "Persuasion" is a most apt term for what in fact issues from this predicament. It certainly applies to the Jacksonian movement—an upsurge of revolt against the moneyed interests, an upsurge led by real-estate speculators, investors, and mercantile adventurers, that spoke as the voice of the People while never getting much more than half the vote, and that gave a sharp momentum to the development of capitalism, urbanism, and industrialism while celebrating the glories of the backwoodsman. Anyone who takes the opportunity to study this episode through Professor Meyers' eyes will gain a priceless initiation into what is most American in American politics.

Irving Kristol

Stop Press!

The Sugar Pill. An Essay on Newspapers. By T. S. Matthews. *Victor Gollancz.* 18s.

When the General Certificate of Education was introduced into our schools some years ago, the *Daily Herald* carried a headline which read, "Farewell, Matric.—Hail the Exam that No one can Fail!" This headline affected me more powerfully than any I remember (except perhaps one, glimpsed distantly across an Underground carriage in somebody else's paper many years ago, which ran "Wrong Man Jumps Out of Window" and has been worrying me silly ever since).

It illustrates to perfection Mr. Matthews' contention that the popular Press has become

the great flatterer of the common man: it assures him every day how good he is, how right his prejudices are, how sound his head and heart, and how little anything matters that is outside his experience or understanding.

There is much more in that vein—penetrating, cynical, amusing, and depressing—in this pleasing book. But what is the point of it all? A retired journalist of Mr. Matthews' cast of mind would naturally want to get all this off his chest, particularly after being editor of *Time*, and he has done it extremely well. It is a *tour-de-force* for an American, even an expatriate, to hit off so admirably both the British Press and its readers. What I do not see is what good it will do. At 18s. for 221 pages, it is unlikely to sell widely among besotted newspaper readers, nor would it cure them if it did. Journalists, on the author's own testimony, either knew it all already or don't care—usually both.

Those non-journalists who think and care about the problem of the Press also know it. Mr. Matthews does not add much to their knowledge, apart from some run-of-the-mill historical stuff which is useful for non-experts. It is always nice to have one's prejudices, or one's commonsense observations (the same thing, depending on who describes them), confirmed by scientific researchers. It not only makes them more respectable, but enables them to be launched as conclusive proof in an argument. But Mr. Matthews is not a scientific researcher—or at least not here, whatever he may have been on *Time*. He makes a faint dab at it, by appending a 38-page appendix, which simply summarises the contents of one issue of the *Daily Mirror* and of the same day's *Manchester Guardian*. Nothing emerges from it, except what anyone could deduce by reading, on any day, the *Daily Mirror* and the *Manchester Guardian*.

I do not myself mind books not being scientific; indeed, for the most part I prefer them that way, having been over-exposed to research and developed a certain immunity, not to say antipathy. But if you are not going to *prove* anything about the Press, but only to judge it, surely you should write as though the judgment mattered? Mr. Matthews says it is clap-trap to pretend that the Press deals with news in any real sense. This is perfectly true. Much of the bad news, as he says, is fairly accurate according to the individual paper's lights; the good news is mainly manufactured, in order to build morale, boost the Government, or just fill the splash

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columns when nothing has happened. (You know the sort of day when the front page is headed, "Mr. Dulles Believed to Want Peace.") Mr. Matthews also says firmly that the Press is not powerful, or at least not constructively and effectively powerful, but only with "a negative power—to titillate, alarm, enrage, amuse, humiliate, annoy, even to drive a person out of his community or his job."

Well, is this bad, or isn't it? Not really, says Mr. Matthews, because nobody takes very much notice of the Press, anyway. They don't vote the way it tells them to, they get their news from the radio, they skim the magazine features and that's the lot. The Press is not our daily bread, but our Sugar Pill, fairly harmless though mildly habit-forming. No one really cared when there was a strike, and newspapers disappeared. And so on and so forth, all very much in the same tone of voice, urbane, witty, and cynical, like a senior civil servant at the high table of All Souls.

A certain amount of this one can take, and indeed the book is not long. But if this is all one is offered, then the predominant after-effect is one of irritation. Because, one says to oneself on finishing the book, all this is a damned scandal if it's true, it's quite terrifying, he ought at least to want to *do* something about it. Of course, it may be that this is really Mr. Matthews' subtle technique—that he intended to leave his readers feeling just like that, in the hope that *they* would want to do something about it. But I do not think so. Mr. Matthews goes on smiling, oh, so tolerantly, at the foibles and delusions of Press lords and public, and I am sure he intends us to smile too. Very superior it will make us feel, no doubt.

No newspaper wholly escapes the implied condemnation. The bulk of the book is devoted to a shrewd anatomy of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Manchester Guardian*. The author comes to exactly the same conclusions about the *Mirror* as did Mr. Henry Fairlie in July's ENCOUNTER.

> *The* Mirror *helps to lower the moral and intellectual standards of the country....*
>
> *...the* Mirror *foists on its readers over-simplified, parochial, and therefore false notions about the world. The* Mirror *is notoriously sentimental and not ashamed of it: it's not only sentimental about dogs, which is bad enough, but about human beings, which is worse.*
>
> *The* Mirror *has much the same mentality and moral outlook as a Butlin camp.*

Mr. Matthews likes the *Guardian* rather better, and admits that it has the relics of a radical nonconformist conscience. But he believes, I think rightly, that like the *Mirror* it is essentially light-minded, by turns kittenish and soliloquising for

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the intelligentsia like an elderly professor. The *Guardian* and the *Mirror* are "both pro-Man and neutral against Heaven"; and the *Guardian* must for ever be seeing three sides to every question and changing the subject, in order to "escape from its suspicion that nothing can be done, so as not to be forced to contemplate the horror of a world out of man's control. . . ." One sees exactly why Mr. Matthews himself likes the *Guardian*.

He does not like *The Times* at all, and naturally despises the Beaverbrook and Rothermere papers. The *Observer*, somewhat superficially, is lumped in with the *Guardian*. Only the *Daily Telegraph* eludes him, which is perhaps significant; it is time someone took this phenomenon of modern journalism apart to see what makes it tick, but I suspect it would be very hard to do. Too hard, evidently, for Mr. Matthews, who makes all the rest look so easy—because they are easy. The *Telegraph* fits into none of his categories, and cannot even readily be described in terms of "personality." It is therefore ignored.

It is all too easy—and, for that reason, not worth doing.

Angus Maude

The European Question

Europe and the Europeans: *An International Discussion*. By Max Beloff. Chatto & Windus. 21s.

Europe is as difficult to define as the Middle East: to define, that is, in the sense of drawing a geographical outline round it, so as to be able to say that everything within the line is Europe and everything outside it is something else. A score of different experts would produce at least a dozen different definitions. And to say that this is not the way to define Europe, which may very well be true, is tacitly to claim that there is some other defining characteristic than geography, and to expose oneself to the challenge of naming it. What is it to be, then? Language, religion, race, and other possible choices would all yield different Europes, just as they would yield different Middle Easts. Language and literature, for instance, would give Persia a better title than Turkey to be included in Europe; religion would presumably exclude a sizeable chunk of the Balkans; and so on. Participation in a common history is perhaps as dependable a notion as can be devised, vague as it is, and itself little more than a geographical accident. It gives Professor Max Beloff perhaps the firmest ground he can find anywhere for the foundations of his study of *Europe and the Europeans*; but his own cautious words indicate how little superstructure it can be expected to sustain:

What European political history yields as a general picture is not then a European community, transitorily divided into separate nations, but a community which is itself a family of nations, prone certainly to barbaric conduct towards each other—as on occasion towards sections of their own citizens—but at the same time uniquely capable of mutual comprehension, and uniquely fitted by common experience to work for common ends.

Is it merely an exhibition of the notorious British practice of "dragging the feet" to believe that this, like patriotism in Edith Cavell's phrase, is not enough—not enough, at any rate, to subsume patriotism in a higher-order consciousness of unity?

The answer is not very clearly to be read in Professor Beloff's book. This is to some extent a reflection of his intention, which was to think out loud rather than to reach definite conclusions. It is also a reflection of the rather unsatisfactory nature of the task set him, which was not of his own choosing. Originating in a series of round-table debates among intellectuals of nearly every country represented in the Council of Europe—hence the sub-title, *An International Discussion*—the book is a sort of symposium written by a single pen: a contradiction in terms which has seldom been successfully resolved since Plato. Professor Beloff is handicapped firstly by the fact that he is a sceptic summing up the discussions, in the main, of believers (and this is very evident in the contrast between M. Denis de Rougemont's iconodule introduction and the tone of the rest of the book); secondly by the fact that he is not (as no one could be) sufficiently expert in all the necessary fields of study to make *ex cathedra* judgments of his own on the prospects of Europe in each of the relevant contexts. His special field is politics, not economics or strategy or the arts or even history; but all these have to be taken into account in order to determine what Europe is or ought to be. Professor Beloff has therefore had to rely heavily on others for certain chapters. The economic arguments, for instance, do not bear so clear an imprint of his thought as the political; they are not wholly consistent with the rest; and the supercilious attitude adopted in them towards bankers and members of parliament seems unworthy of him.

But it is not only the answers that are unclear: the questions are so also. There is one fundamental question which, on the evidence of this book, the participants in the discussions seem never to have faced. This is, what is meant by a belief in the unity of Europe? Is it a belief that such a unity naturally exists, whether potential or actual (like a belief in the Holy Trinity);

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or is it a belief that it must at all costs be achieved (like a belief in stopping hydrogen-bomb tests)? Probably both beliefs are held about the unity of Europe, but in different contexts. And that is in part why the matter is so confused and the measures taken or urged make such a tangled web. For two sorts of unification seem to be pursued or advocated concurrently in Europe, and they are in fact historically the only two ways in which larger sovereign units ever have grown out of smaller ones. One is the evolutionary way, which culminates in the recognition that to all intents and purposes, through links of common interest and history and sentiment and general congruity, those who formerly thought of themselves as separate are really one nation (or whatever the appropriate unit may be called), when all that remains is to put it on a formal basis. The other is the way of imposition by force or fear. The first is the way that the theorists of "the Six" believe they are pursuing. (Professor Beloff significantly quotes, though he does not examine, the view that the "Europe of the Six" is the Europe of the Counter-Reformation.) The second is the way that produced NATO. It needs no rubbing in that Great Britain belongs to the second but not to the first. (Professor Beloff is nowhere more English than when he argues that "the military approach has hitherto always achieved most.")

The essential difference between the two approaches lies in two differing conceptions of the sentiment of "being a European." Is this sentiment prior or posterior to the achievement of institutional unification? Most Englishmen would say it can only be posterior; and though there may have been notable exceptions who felt themselves to be "citizens of Europe," in Edward Gibbon's phrase, they are exceptions of the kind that prove the rule. Professor Beloff, however, has undertaken to assemble the thoughts of a group of people many of whom think the answer is "prior." The difference between the two is liable to produce two Europes which are not merely qualitatively different, but different in size, shape, and composition. Countries that would be excluded from the first conception, such as Turkey, are included in the second; others that would be included in the first, such as Spain, are excluded from the second. The result is that the only group of European countries which shows signs of really coalescing into a new unit of sovereignty is the highest common factor—the group that is unmistakeably common to both conceptions. If "the Six" succeeds in forming a new kind of political union, it will be an important step. It will be irreversible and probably inextensible. But it will not be Europe.

There is in fact little chance that the *à priori* and the *à posteriori* Europe, the ideal and the empirical, ever will coincide in actuality. If a new and larger political organism does emerge from the present ferment, it will probably be no tidier or more logical a representative of its order of magnitude than the present nation-states are of theirs. As Professor Beloff points out, the nation-state, which was invented in Europe, is by no means yet obsolete. Here and there, in fact, it is not yet even fully realised, as examples like Luxembourg and San Marino serve to show; and some of the most important nation-states in Europe are less than a century old. The crucial point is, to what political unit the general sense of loyalty is primarily directed. For most so-called Europeans, the answer is still the nation-state. For some, it is still a smaller unit: quite apart from those who still live in autonomous city-states or grand duchies, there is still a strong particularism in Germany, for instance, or in the Balkans; and in common Greek parlance the word *patriótis* still means an inhabitant of the same village. Old political forms may still be vital while new ones are coming into being. Even Aristotle was still writing about the Greek city-state as the last word in political organisation while his pupil, Alexander of Macedon, was busy abolishing it.

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Nevertheless, it is common ground to all but the obtusest reactionaries that none of the existing nation-states of Europe is large enough, in the simple sense of head of population, to stand on its own in a world dominated by two superpowers. It is equally impossible in the economic, the strategic, and the scientific-technological context for the nation-states of Europe singly to compete on equal terms with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Yet the realisation of this fact does not seem to be enough by itself to lead to the sort of action that reason and expediency dictate. What is to be done to bring that action about? Professor Beloff makes the interesting suggestion that

unless the European question can be injected into national politics as a central issue, that is to say one around which party divisions actually form, European integration in a political sense is unlikely to advance much beyond its present stage.

This is certainly a very improbable development in British political life, and therefore Professor Beloff's conclusion will disappoint his European friends. But in the economic, strategic, and scientific-technological senses, as distinct from the political sense, almost every important step so far has been the outcome of fear. And there is little reason to be found in Professor Beloff's book for expecting this pattern to be altered in future.

C. M. Woodhouse

Three Poets

A Winter Talent. By DONALD DAVIE. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 10s. 6d.

Brutus's Orchard. By ROY FULLER. *Deutsch.* 12s. 6d.

Rilke: Poems 1906-26. Translated by J. B. LEISHMAN. *Hogarth Press.* 25s.

OF COURSE we are living in reduced circumstances. "Common to all the poems is the conviction that in the present age the poet, no more than other men, can afford the large gesture and confident surrender to irrational afflatus." This is from the blurb to Mr. Donald Davie's latest volume; the syntax is ambiguous, but it means that we can none of us afford the confident surrender. Poetry for Mr. Davie is a dangerous trade, to be approached only with the utmost caution. Determined to run no risks, he anticipates somewhere or other in this volume almost all the criticisms that could possibly be made of it. No large gestures; metre has been loosened, but only "judiciously"; the penultimate piece answers a critic who has accused Mr. Davie of not daring to feel; and worry is expressed in other places about making the verses scan and not saying more than one means. This meticulousness has its due reward. The poems have the virtues they profess. The language is cool, accurate, and nicely varied; sometimes these qualities are sufficiently heightened to become positively lively. As for the judicious loosening of metre—well, yes, one can detect, for a few occasional paces, something approaching a collected canter; and certainly there is none of the broken-down stumble that afflicts the ear in much contemporary verse. In criticism Mr. Davie has appeared as such a jealous guardian of the chastity of the muse that one almost began to fear for her health. However, she seems to be bearing up pretty well, if a little anxiously.

When the cloud of hypochondria lifts, Mr. Davie can be very good indeed. The best poems here are "Obiter Dicta," addressed to his father, and "Dissentient Voices," a sequence of four pieces about a Nonconformist childhood. They seem to have stronger roots than the rest, and show how good a writer Mr. Davie can be when he has something better to think about than purity of diction and being generally judicious about everything. The weakest work is in the section called "Italy." Mr. Kingsley Amis, a critic with whom I do not often find myself in agreement, has remarked, "We do not want any more poems about foreign cities." But very likely we don't. Mr. Davie quotes this pronouncement, anticipating criticism as usual; but he does not disarm it. It is almost impossible to make poetry about what are already works of art in their own right unless the vitality of the originals can be matched by a strong and fresh reaction to them. These dealings with Piranesi, Brunelleschi, the Renaissance in Tuscany, the Boboli gardens and all are at best judicious, at worst somewhat less.

The fact is that Mr. Davie, besides manifest integrity and seriousness, has a real talent at present suffering badly from under-nourishment. Whether this is due to a mistaken regimen or a poor digestion it is hard to say. No one can live on worry and a determination not to get the feet wet for very long. And this sort of anxious scrupulosity is separated by a thin line from self-conscious posturing. But you can't catch Mr. Davie out; looking back I see that he has already made the point himself:

A conscious carriage must become a strut;
Fastidiousness can only stalk
And seem at last not even tasteful but
A ruffled hen too apt to squawk.

To be sure, what with the dollar gap and the bank rate as high as it is, surrender to irrational afflatus is a terrible thing; but if one were to open the window just a little? I doubt in this case if the draught would be very dangerous,

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and it would be nice to have a breath of fresh air.

And now for reckless middle age. Mr. Roy Fuller, whom one normally thinks of as a poet of low tones and moderate statement, looks positively abandoned in comparison.

Upon a gate in carven stone
Two armoured torsos sneer with pride;
The empires riddled to the bone
As sick men stand, who stand and hide
A mortal sickness; and the poet,
Like the great apes, in childhood gay
Morose thereafter, dare not show it:
"Accept, accept," his verses say.

Most of Mr. Davie's approved virtues could be predicated of Mr. Fuller—a rational form, language temperate, studied, and precise; but others as well—a controlled tenderness, sympathy, a deep sense of the present terrifying situation of mankind, and a power to see these transitory terrors (transitory because they must pass either by killing us all or changing into something else) against the few things that are permanent:

2nd SHEPHERD *Shepherd, I see in you the dupe*
Of happiness, the weakling who
Finds warmth in huddling with the group,
And wishes what he felt were true.
This lank flock, withered ear,
Accept for what they are.
1st SHEPHERD *Shepherd, I must survey with sorrow*
My pasture trenches with arms and street,
Yet I will hope to see a morrow
When sheep and town will join to meet
Real enemies—the four
Seasons, man's last four score.

The last line points to a prevailing concern of this volume—the approach of age. A dangerous subject, for Yeats has said it all. But without seeking to approach or echo those magnificent grumblings Mr. Fuller faces the universal enemy with dignity and a wry pathos. There are unevennesses in these poems; flat lines, unrhythms that just fail, climaxes that do not sufficiently rise. But the prevailing impression is of sanity and wide sympathies; a restrained lyrical intensity that commands respect and gives its own kind of rather dry-flavoured satisfaction.

Mr. Leishman continues his translations of Rilke with a large body of miscellaneous poems, written between 1906 and the poet's death in 1926, but never published by him in collected volumes. Many of them were given to friends, many are fragments and early drafts of poems published in other forms. The main difficulty of these translations is to know who they are meant for. They include versions of some great poems, and many lovely lesser ones; but the mass of fragments and first drafts are of interest only to students of Rilke, who will make their acquaintance in the original. They can hardly stand on their own feet as English poems. The translation has the qualities we expect of Mr. Leishman—scholarship, fidelity, and a brave effort at rendering the original rhythms. But no translation can give everything, and the attempt to render the peculiarities of Rilke's diction often results in flatness and, as far as English is concerned, a failure of linguistic tact. The very best service a translation can perform is to send us to the original with increased understanding; and the purpose would probably have been better served by a smaller selection of poems printed along with the German, as in the earlier versions of the sonnets and the Duino Elegies.

Graham Hough

And Yet. . . .

A Fretful Midge. By TERENCE DE VERE WHITE. *Routledge & Kegan Paul.* 18s.

"A HORSE that has grazed on a prairie will be fretful in a paddock: and there is something about Ireland, not only in respect to size, but in the prevailing spirit which creates a feeling of mental enclosure."

Mr. de Vere White, who wrote these words, is a Dublin lawyer, art collector, one-time would-be politician, biographer of Isaac Butt, horseman, and scholar, and he knows his green paddock intimately. Born in 1912, he came to consciousness in the doldrum years after the Anglo-Irish and the Civil wars. In literature, Ireland's equivalent of the *grand siècle* was over: the points of view of Synge, Joyce, Yeats, Moore, and Shaw had little or nothing in common with the atmosphere of bigotry, economic anxiety, and sentimentality about Easter Week that now prevailed. Even O'Casey preferred Devon. The inanities of half-educated priests were accepted as though they were the pronouncements of a Pius XI, by politicians whose talents would have been fully extended on an urban district council, and who now found themselves cabinet ministers in an almost sovereign state. Gunmen, sometimes treated as heroes, were murdering one by one the men of skill and courage who might have made Ireland into a properly respected and self-respecting land. And over it all there presided and presides the tall, quiet, charming, ruth-

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less figure of de Valera who could give even an Ulbricht or a Laval a few pounds in the Disingenuity Stakes, and still win by a short head. ("Everything," said Mr. de Vere White, "has been grist to Mr. de Valera's mill; but most of all he has benefited by the shortness of public memory.") Meanwhile the country has petered away towards bankruptcy: the young and the enterprising get out of it as fast as ever they can: and the prevailing Jansenism would make the place a laughing-stock if that Jansenism were not so ineffably dreary. And yet, and yet....

There used to be, there perhaps still is, a vogue in certain circles for reading French 18th-century memoirs. The same figures flit through the pages of the Baron de Besenval, Madame d'Epinay, Madame de la Tour du Pin, and the rest of that talkative throng: the same situations, characters, and scandals are discussed. Madame de Luxembourg's supper parties, the Duc de Richelieu's amours, that nasty business about the necklace—they become familiar, and welcome, old friends. So it is with the books that have, in such profusion, come from the pens of the Irish writers in this *petit siècle* of theirs. We know Sean O'Faolain's views on the censorship, we know Frank O'Connor's, we know Arland Ussher's, we have heard Honor Tracey grind her sharp teeth at it too. Everyone has had his say about the Lane bequest, the border, emigration, Dev and the oath, neutrality, the mysterious love life of the Irish. To those whose hobby it is to study the distorted microcosm of a society that is the Irish Republic, yet another book on these and similar subjects is bound to give pleasure, particularly when it is as well-written, and spiced with such excellent anecdotes, as is Mr. de Vere White's book of quasi-memoirs. One begins to feel the pleasurable excitement of a mathematician who sees the end of the long equation in sight: one or two more books, and one will surely soon know *everything* about that small and beautiful country which has had a generation in which to run its own affairs, which has failed to solve its possibly insoluble economic problems, and which seems to be moving slowly towards its end.

Most English people, however, are totally uninterested in Irish matters. For them this book will, or should, have another and more sinister interest. Ireland ceased to be imperial a generation before the rest of these islands voted that we could no longer struggle against enormous odds, and chose leisure and insolvency in preference to hard work and unpopularity. Though the causes and circumstances are very different, the end is likely to be much the same. A glance across the Irish sea is a caution as to what power in the hands of leprechauns and boobies may produce here in the next decade or two. When the Dutch lost their fleet, they lost their painters too. The German tanks that raced across France also crushed contemporary French literature flat beneath their tracks. The connection between the dwindling heaps of gold in the vaults of the Bank of England and the diminuendo sneers and snickers of our fashionable Chelsea playwrights is obvious. Are we even likely to have chroniclers of our decline who can write with the wit and elegance of our Irish neighbours, or are we condemned to go down to a canting cacophony of humanistic humbug and pessimistic plagiarism pinched from over the other Channel?

For, despite everything, the Irish, or at least the literary Irish, have usually preserved an honourable desire to entertain their readers. *A Fretful Midge* is far more entertaining than its title—or than this fretful notice—would indicate. Some of the anecdotes, such as the story of Toucher O'Toole or the buffoonery that followed on Mr. de Vere White's purchase of a Henry Moore Reclining Figure, are extremely funny. Many of the epigrams are as sharp and as neat as can be. ("In Ireland the young are given nothing and forgiven everything.") And there are descriptive passages, such as an election meeting at Manorhamilton and a wild ride with the Bray Harriers, which are pure delight. Hence the words "and yet..." earlier in this review. For Ireland still preserves that ferocious, often rather coarse gaiety that flashes and singes in the poems Yeats wrote in his old age. It has nothing to do with politics and precious little to do with literature—it is perhaps found at its purest in ballads such as *The Night before Larry was Stretched*—and it is fairly safe to say that no matter what happens, it will endure. Which is something to be thankful for.

Constantine Fitz Gibbon

Novels

At Lady Molly's. By Anthony Powell. *Heinemann.* 15s.

Pnin. By Vladimir Nabokov. *Heinemann.* 13s. 6d.

Among the Dahlias. by William Sansom. *Hogarth Press.* 15s.

The Main Chance. By Peter Wildeblood. *Weidenfeld & Nicolson.* 13s. 6d.

Last Tales. By Isak Dinesen. *Putnam.* 18s.

Undertaking to fill the vast empty space between the covers of a book is a task which should appear far more daunting than it does to far too many novelists. It is a one-man show in which the writer can never

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escape the glare of the spotlight, given without props or scenery to an audience which is scattered in beds or at lonely restaurant tables, on the tops of buses or in National Health waiting-rooms. It is an audience likely to leave at any moment, which would no doubt prefer to be eating or making love or called in by the doctor, and, in the end, the only thing that can hold it is the writer himself, not his plot, his scenery, or style, but the single, magnetic, irresistible voice which can still the chattering schoolgirls in the gallery, start and stop laughter, enforce silence, and suddenly command tears.

It is odd that in an act which demands an egoist, and enforces exhibitionism, the most effective, compelling voice now raised should be that of Mr. Anthony Powell, for Mr. Powell in his own book is so self-effacing that he makes Herr Isseyvoo look less like a camera than a Gypsy Rose Lee. Half-way through *At Lady Molly's* he sees a girl and says he wishes to marry her. By the end of the book they are engaged. This romance occupies approximately two sentences. At other moments he stands with an assortment of girls in cinema queues. What happens when they go into the cinema we do not know, and what occurs when they come out we feel it would be impertinent to ask; and yet Mr. Powell, apparently so self-effacing, has brought off the greatest feat of the one-man show. With enormous confidence and cunning, by a flick of a cigarette case, a twitch of his back at the audience, a throw-away line, he has created a world. And just when you think he is so modest, you realise that it is Mr. Anthony Powell's world, and belongs to no one else at all.

Mr. Powell's world concerns the English upper classes, and, in a quite unusual way, he writes about them with truth. Everyone knows that, on the whole, these people lead uneventful and tedious lives. Their grotesque system of education has left them intellectually timid and frequently sexually maladroit. Their flats in Kensington are dingy and ill-decorated, their daughters toothy and thick-waisted, their dreadful country houses draughty and comfortless, their conversation an endless enquiry into who might possibly be related to whom. Although these facts must be obvious to the most casual social observer, there has been a conspiracy by popular novelists, from Ouida to Mr. Waugh and Miss Mitford, to make believe that the home life of members of the House of Lords is in some way more dashing, romantic, or exciting than that of us dreary old middle-class novelists and dentists whose fridges are full of frozen veg. and whose lounges are full of Telly.

With this fantasy Mr. Powell will have nothing to do. It is true that he can do upper-class dialogue with such accuracy that some of his pages have the authentic boredom of life. The book really shines in the passages which concern Widmerpool. I cannot believe that this great creation is unknown to anyone, but he is the typical end-product of the public school system. Pompous, humourless, appallingly priggish, and with fascist leanings, Widmerpool spent his childhood going for long runs alone, training for teams in which he was never included. In the present book, Widmerpool contemplates an unlikely marriage with a somewhat beaten-up widow a good deal older than himself. His preliminary attempt to go to bed with her ends in disaster, but Widmerpool bobs up unabashed, self-satisfied as ever.

Mr. Powell has also created an extraordinarily accurate and comic Kensington General who plays the cello and reads Freud and Virginia Woolf with boyish enthusiasm. Towards the end of the book there is a long paragraph in which this General and Mr. Powell discuss Widmerpool's sexual debâcle, the novelist being constantly embarrassed by the General's Freudian approach. I believe this passage to be as fine a piece of sustained comic writing, ingenious, humorous, and absurd, as we shall find for a long time.

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Mr. Nabokov, you may recall, wrote a book called *Lolita*. This was praised by Mr. Graham Greene which led Mr. Greene into disfavour with Mr. John Gordon of *The Sunday Express*, and led to the foundation of the John Gordon Society, all of which gave those who read the *Spectator* a good laugh for a short time. *Pnin* is unlikely to create any such larks; it is a beautifully written and moving account of the troubles that beset an absurd little White Russian professor in an American University. Pnin has a ghastly Middle European wife with an even more terrible lover named Dr. Eric Wind. By him she has a child, a sensitive, artistic boy named Vincent. The well-meaning attempts of Pnin to entertain this intellectual youth with footballs and the works of Jack London all saddened me. Pnin was once deeply in love with a gentle Jewess he met at a summer resort in the Baltic; of her the book says, "One had to forget —because one could not live with the thought that this graceful, fragile, tender young woman, with those eyes, that smile, those gardens, and snow in the background, had been brought in a cattle cart to an extermination camp and killed by an injection of phenol into the heart."

Reading this sentence in a comic book by a Russian author makes you realise how deep is the European tragedy, how shallow and peevish the anger of young writers in the insulated England of to-day.

In *Among the Dahlias* Mr. Sansom has reprinted a number of his short stories. Some are very funny, all are written in the fine prose he so easily commands. Sometimes Mr. Sansom writes a story which I cannot apply to life. I don't believe, for instance, that a man would be seriously upset because a stray lion does not consider him a tasty morsel to eat. When he hits on a simpler theme, opening time in a London pub, a Jutland sailor who loves and beats his wife, an ageing wife who buys weaker and weaker electric light bulbs to conceal her wrinkles, he does so very well that I regret his occasional last flings with surrealism. With his great technical skill Mr. Sansom seems to me most appealing, as a writer, in those stories which involve his heart.

Mr. Wildeblood is a journalist and has written a book which has no pretensions to being a work of art. It is a modest, high-spirited bit of satire likely to be greatly enjoyed by those concerned with television—press lords, agents, career women, quiz prodigies, and shop stewards. And that, God help us, just about includes us all.

The *Last Tales* of Isak Dinesen is a volume the sight of which filled me with the grimmest foreboding. This author has previously written a book called *Seven Gothic Tales* and if there is one thing I can't do with it's a Gothic tale. In fact, my idea of hell would be to be locked for many years in St. Pancras station with nothing to read but the works of Mr. Mervyn Peake. Out of *Last Tales*, when you open it, a leaflet falls, no doubt designed to soften up the civilian population before the bombardment begins. "Her novel might have come from the hand of a younger Le Fanu" the leaflet says. "Maturin's Melmoth comes to mind; the 'Moralités Légendaires' of Laforgue." I can't say that Maturin's Melmoth sprang at once to my mind; in fact, the occasions when it does, never having read it, are pretty rare. However, I waded into Isak Dinesen and found her style reminiscent of Kipling, Saki, whoever wrote "Kismet," and the Bible. Things in her stories never happen, they "come to pass." The characters have names like Lone and Eitel and they embark on their endless anecdotes with off-putting phrases like "And now I shall begin, and I shall forget nothing." Although I found many of these stories unilluminating, the one in which the virginal agnostic lady contracts syphilis by kissing the toe of St. Peter's statue at least administers a certain shock. It can also be said that Isak Dinesen is not afraid of the grand manner, hers is like the voice of an old ham actor ranting at the gods. At times it attains some magnificence, and many will face the *longueurs* of this quaint performance for the sake of being able to say they went.

John Mortimer

Body and Soul

A Theory of Disease. By ARTHUR GUIRDHAM. *Allen and Unwin.* 21s.

IT IS many years since Henry Sigerist suggested that each civilisation gets the diseases it deserves: that Elizabethan buccaneers suffered from venereal disease related to their excesses; 18th-century hedonists from such "luxury" afflictions as dropsy and gout; romantics from their tubercular lovesick declines; and 20th-century tycoons from stress disorders, neuroses, and stomach ulcers. Dr. Guirdham does not, I think, mention Sigerist, but he has expanded on the old theory in an attempt to explore the links between different civilisations and cultures, and the diseases to which they are prone. Health, he states boldly, is a by-product of religious experience; and though the time has not yet come when we can put this knowledge to good use in treatment, there is already one golden rule we all can recognise; that it is as much a waste of

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time to seek health directly as it is to seek happiness directly (either through religion, or by any other means), because it is "the accidental product arising out of self-annihilation."

Before dismissing this as merely a symptom of that mental inflationary trend which overtakes so many aspiring mystics, it is worth remembering that the idea of health as a state of unawareness of self (particularly of the physical self) is a tenet of many religions and philosophies and, at least in a negative sense, is quite widely accepted here by the profession. (A commonly used argument against psychoanalysis is that it encourages people to become morbidly preoccupied with their horrible selves, when they would be far better out for a good, brisk walk: unjust, because the aim of analysis is to free people from the dreary self-preoccupation that is a symptom of neurosis—it performs the function of a purge.) Certainly hypochondria is a disease; to take people out of themselves should be one of the first aims of medical treatment. And there is a more positive sense in which Guirdham's theory is also applicable:

"Dr Lovelock informed the writer that when he won the mile in the Olympic Games of 1936 he ran without any sense of rivalry but with a visual image in his mind of himself moving not as fast but as gracefully as he was able. He had, in fact, realised the principle enunciated by Coué that the imagination is stronger than the will. His personality was merged and lost in an artistic projection of his own capabilities. He ran, in fact, as an instrument of art, rather than as an individual, and achieved his greatest personal triumph when his personality was submerged in the impersonal reality of artistic expression."

Dr. Roger Bannister expressed something of the same feelings about his four-minute mile; coming off the last green at St. Andrews after winning the 1957 Open, Bobby Locke told a television interviewer that he attributed his come-back to (if I heard him aright) the recovery of a trancelike frame of mind, which had deserted him for a year or two. To lose oneself, in this sense, is to gain a world fame.

Examples might be multiplied endlessly. Herrigel, the American professor who took a six-year course in Zen archery in Japan, has described its aim as the achievement of aimlessness—in the sense that the archer must banish consciousness of self, so that he does not loose the arrow: the arrow looses itself, at the moment when the archer is at one with his target—just as most of us find, when we seek to throw scrumpled up pieces of paper into a wastepaper basket, that our accuracy is incomparably greater when we throw them without thinking. The body functions better when it is not tensed by mental or emotional stress. Not that it is any use trying to avoid being ill by pretending you are not ill: the process is unconscious. But people should not, other things being equal, be encouraged to fuss about their health—even with the best of preventive intentions. "The need to-day —Detection Centres," ran the headline of one of a recent series of articles on cancer; but there is a risk that such methods—mass radiography for TB is another example—may actually do harm, by creating the unnecessary awareness of self that the philosophers deplore.

I do not feel entirely happy about Dr. Guirdham's approach: he tends to make sweeping assertions unsupported by evidence—and, what can be as bad, he has the Toynbeean trick of making generalisations which are themselves illuminating, but basing them on examples which are inadequate or unrepresentative, designed to give the illusion that he is being empirical. But it is not necessary to accept his thesis to be grateful for his attempt to shake medicine out of the mechanistic chains that now bind it; *A Theory of Disease* is provocative, readable, and full of good sense in its determination to regard health as essentially a problem of personality.

Brian Inglis

West End, East End

The Selected Writings of Sydney Smith. By W. H. Auden. *Faber and Faber.* 30s.

No Earthly Command. By Arthur Calder-Marshall. *Hart-Davis.* 21s.

In a concise and admirable introduction to his selection from the polemic writings of Sydney Smith, Canon of St. Paul's, Mr. W. H. Auden quotes Yeats'

What is Whiggery?
A levelling, rancorous, rational sort of mind
That never looked out of a drunkard's eye
Or out of the eye of a saint . . .

but remarks: "Unattractive and shallow as one feels so many liberals to be, how rarely on any concrete social issue does one find the liberal position the wrong one. Again, how often, alas, do those very philosophers and writers who have most astounded us by their profound imaginative insights into the human heart and human existence, dismay us by the folly and worse of their judgments on the issue of everyday life." The Whig parson, Sydney Smith—in spite of occasional flights of Lear-borne fantasy—certainly never looked out of a drunkard's eye any more than he looked out of a saint's; rational his

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mind may have been, but levelling and rancorous it was not. Best known as a wit, a conversationalist, and one of the most entertaining of letter-writers, he was also a founder of the *Edinburgh Review* and the most brilliant polemic writer of 19th-century England, if one excludes the fin-du-siècle Shaw. For on the evidence of this volume, which includes the famous Peter Plymley Letters (as cogent a piece of political reasoning ever penned), his polemic writings remain a model of clarity of exposition, of marshalling and disposition of argument, of devastating humour and ludicrous analogy—ridicule, it would seem, has rid the world of more abuses than the solemnest moral indignation. A liberal, believing in progress, the benefits of science and the march of reason, Sydney Smith's mind, like Shaw's, was not profound but acute and clear; he had not an atom of nastiness in him, and not the least concept or apprehension of the nature of evil (as, for example, Blake had, or Baudelaire); he had a bluff yet intelligent hatred of any kind of immoderation or crankiness; and he did a great deal of good. When he died he did not leave the world a better place, but certainly more comfortable. For it was the outward and tangible manifestations of evil to which both he and Shaw gave battle with apparent success. Nearly everything that Sydney Smith fought for with his weapons of wit, ridicule, reasonableness (and not least a prose style characterised by the rarest of combinations, pellucidity and exuberance) he lived to see achieved: the emancipation of the Catholics, the reform of Parliament, the repeal of the absurd Game Laws, the end of the miserable employment of children as chimney sweeps, and a dozen similar injustices and imbecilities which one cannot imagine anybody defending for a moment, were we not afflicted by so many new ones that have since budded hydra-headed to take their place.

It is impossible to conceive anyone less like the sparkling socialite Canon of St. Paul's than the self-effacing, saintlike, and apparently ungifted Vice-Admiral the Reverend Alexander Riall Wadham Woods, D.S.O. and bar, whose life is the focus of an odd book by Mr. Arthur Calder-Marshall. Of him "He had said nothing which anybody could remember, written nothing which anyone thought worth preserving, and done nothing which was really spectacular," Mr. Calder-Marshall observes towards the end of his book, which is in no way a conventional biography but the record of a biographical enquiry, very much after the plan of A. J. Symons' *The Quest for Corvo*, with this difference: the resolution of Mr. Calder-Marshall's search for the Admiral turned priest proved to be his own conversion to Christianity. It began when Mr. Marshall was approached by an American film company to write a biography of the Admiral with the idea of using it as the basis of a film. "People don't want Sex any more," was the succinct explanation of the film company's representative: "they want God." An obituary notice in the *New York Times* had said that during the Battle of Jutland the Admiral, then a signals officer, received "an interposed signal which came from no earthly captain but from a higher command" which led to his taking orders and becoming the curate of an East End church and chaplain of a Sailors' Home. There could be a film in this, they thought. So Mr. Calder-Marshall set out to discover what he could about the Admiral, visiting first his relatives and then the people he had worked among in Dockland. The supernatural signal at Jutland turned out to be a journalist's invention, but by the time Mr. Calder-Marshall ascertained this fact—which of course torpedoed the film project—he was already fascinated by what he had learnt about the character of "Alex." Unassuming, undramatic, ascetic, in no way exceptional, this simple man had made a profound (and to Mr. Calder-Marshall an inexplicable) impression on everyone, without apparently having ever done or said anything out of the ordinary. Seeking for a clue, Mr. Calder-Marshall turned his attention to the faith Alex believed in, and in the process of finding out about it became himself a Christian.

Mr. Calder-Marshall describes the course of his conversion with great honesty and competence, so well and so absorbingly that his occasional lapses into spiritual vulgarity (I fear that on one or two occasions I was reminded, painfully, of some of the niaiseries of Mr. Beverley Nichols' *The Fool Hath Said*) are doubly distressing. He is amazed that the Admiral (who emerges from his pages the true pattern of a saint) should be a sentimentalist revelling in Winnie-the-Pooh and Richmal Crompton's William books: I am amazed that Mr. Calder-Marshall, who describes himself as an intellectually tough sceptic to begin with, should muffle so much of the impact of his book with this sad stuff:

"I could imagine a scene in Paradise, when the old Jutland lie was revived in the obituary notice. I could imagine God saying, 'What are we going to do about this, Alex?' and Alex answering, 'Let's forget it, Lord. It'll die a natural death.'

Then perhaps God said, 'No, you've loved me very well. And I know you'll hate this, but I think a book about you might help other people.'"

David Wright

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JANUARY 1957

TEN DAYS IN CAIRO
Dwight Macdonald

TWO WANDERING SATELLITES
Peter Wiles

ST. GUY AND MERRY RUSSIA
Malcolm Muggeridge

★

MARCH 1957

THE WORLD'S CITIES—MANCHESTER
A. J. P. Taylor

THE "HARD-HEADED" FRENCHMAN
Daniel Lerner

FROM CLARISSA TO TEMPLE DRAKE
Leslie A. Fiedler

★

APRIL 1957

WHY IS GAMBLING?
Angus Maude

THE WORLD'S CITIES—PARIS
H. J. Kaplan

ON KIPLING'S INDIA
Nirad C. Chaudhuri

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THE ARTHUR MILLER CASE
Mary McCarthy

THE WORLD'S CITIES—LONDON
William Sansom

THE INDIAN MUTINY
Colin Welch

JUNE 1957

ARNOLD TOYNBEE'S MILLENNIUM
H. R. Trevor-Roper

JANE AUSTEN'S "EMMA"
Lionel Trilling

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Marcus Cunliffe

★

JULY 1957

ENGAGED IN WRITING I (novel)
(Part II in August)
Stephen Spender

ANSWERS TO 34 QUESTIONS
Igor Stravinsky

ENGLISH CRIMINALS
Peter Wildeblood

★

SEPTEMBER 1957

THE NIGHT EVITA DIED
Max-Pol Fouchet

THE MONTESI AFFAIR
Wayland Young

DIONYSUS AND THE WELFARE STATE
Geoffrey Gorer

★

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THE PASSING OF THE EUROPEAN ORDER
Herbert Luthy

CONVERSATION WITH E. M. FORSTER
Angus Wilson

THE WORLD'S CITIES—TOKYO
Edward Seidensticker

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About Our Authors

ABIOSEH NICOL *writes of himself:* "I am a West African writer and critic in my mid-thirties, educated at home in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, with finishing touches at Cambridge and London. Still being finished. Won the Margaret Wrong Prize and Medal for Literature in Africa, 1951. My major interests are motoring (I do not own a car), Christian ethics (which I try with varying success to practise), and the British intelligentsia (whom I admire). My dislikes are: unmusical noises; racial prejudice against Jews, Anglo-Saxons, and other coloured peoples; purposeless cruelty in every form."

ROBERT GUILLAIN was born in 1908 at Dunkirk. A doctor of law, he interested himself in science, politics, and journalism. In 1937 he went to report on the Japanese war in China and visited Shanghai, Peking, and Tokyo. Then came Pearl Harbour and he was held prisoner in Japan until the end of the war. Since the war, he has been correspondent in the Far East for *Le Monde*. His book, *The Blue Ants*, a full report on his visit to China, was recently published by Secker and Warburg.

ROBIN IRONSIDE. Painter and writer. Born 1912. Assistant Keeper of the Tate Gallery 1937–46. Assistant Secretary of the Contemporary Art Society 1946–52. Has had exhibits at the Redfern and Hanover Galleries, and his pictures have been acquired for the Tate, City of Leicester Art Gallery, and others. Did the decors for several operas at Covent Garden. Author of *The Pre-Raphaelites* (1948), *British Painting Since 1939* (1948).

ANTHONY RHODES intended to make the regular army his career, but he was invalided out at the end of the war. His first book, *Sword of Bone*, told of the "phoney war," and the retreat from Dunkirk. Since then, he has taught at the British Institute in Florence, Eton College, and as Assistant Professor of English Literature at Geneva University —where he took a degree in French and Italian literature. He gave up teaching in 1953, and has since been working on a book, *D'Annunzio's Italy*, to be published next year. Among his other books are *A Sabine Journey*, the novels, *A Ball in Venice*, *The Uniform*, *The General's Summer-house*, and a travel book about Bosnia-Hercegovina, *Where the Turk Trod*. He was in Budapest during the Revolution and has since been employed intermittently by the *Daily Telegraph* to cover Eastern European affairs.

COLIN WELCH *writes:* "Born 1924 in East Anglia, which he still loves above all—not least because journalists are there regarded with proper suspicion, fear, and contempt. Educated Stowe and Peterhouse (major history scholar on promise, rusticated on performance). Education completed by head and other wounds incurred as officer in Royal Warwickshire Regiment. After *Glasgow Herald* and Colonial Office, joined *Daily Telegraph* in 1950. Started and now runs with Michael Wharton, 'Way of the World' column, in which pure milk of high Toryism is curdled by sad and sentimental sarcasm. Proudest moment when accused by pink B.B.C.-man of 'poisoning whole nation.' Native arrogance tempered by Scots wife and two children (the elder, 5, a registered Noddy-addict)."

LESLIE A. FIEDLER, professor of literature at the University of Montana, will doubtless be described for some years to come—despite his protests—as "probably the foremost of the younger American literary critics and essayists." . . . Denis de Rougemont's essay represents a condensed version of a chapter from *Man's Western Quest*, which Allen and Unwin will publish early this spring. . . . PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE, whose article on "The New Inequality" appeared in the November 1956 issue, is on the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*. . . . ANGUS MAUDE, co-author with Roy Lewis of *The English Middle-Classes*, is M.P. (Conservative, though at present beyond reach of the Whip) for Ealing South. . . . C. M. WOODHOUSE is Director-General of the Royal Institute for International Affairs. . . . CONSTANTINE FITZ GIBBON'S *The Blitz* was recently published by Wingate. . . . BRIAN INGLIS is on the staff of *The Spectator*. . . . The picture of Noddy on p. 18 is from the television puppet-show and is reproduced by courtesy of Hulton Press.

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I. Telephus discovered in Arcadia by Hercules.

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II. Chiron teaches Hercules to play the lyre.

Opposite: III. Iphigenia in Tauris.

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IV. Telephus suckled by deer (Detail of Plate I.)

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WE ANNOUNCE FOR PUBLICATION THIS SPRING

GENERAL

Other People's Worlds

NAOMI MITCHISON

In the spring of 1957 Mrs. Mitchison spent two months travelling in Ghana and Nigeria. In this provocative and stimulating book she records her impressions of what she saw and heard, relating them to the wider problem of the impact of different civilisations, particularly of those at different stages of development, upon each other.

March — Illustrated — 16*s.*

Corsair Country — XAN FIELDING

Mr. Fielding started on his journey from Tangier to Tripoli determined to rediscover the harbours and towns of the Barbary Coast pirates, to find what was left of those ruthless and inspired sailors who terrorised the maritime nations of Europe for three centuries, and as he travelled his journey became a voyage into the rich past of Mediterranean history.

February — Illustrated — 25*s.*

Writers at Work

Edited by MALCOLM COWLEY

Interviews with distinguished writers of six countries, including E. M. Forster, Mauriac, Faulkner, Thurber, Moravia, Simenon, Joyce Cary, Dorothy Parker, Thornton Wilder, Robert Penn Warren, Angus Wilson, Truman Capote, and Francoise Sagan, in which they frankly discuss their own careers, other people's work, and the problems of writing fiction in the contemporary world.

About 21*s.*

FICTION

Niki: The Story of a Dog — TIBOR DERY

Tibor Dery, for long famous as an author in his native Hungary, was recently, at the age of 63, sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for his part in the 1956 rising. We are proud to publish this superb short novel, the first of his books ever to appear in the English language. About 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Bankrupts — BRIAN GLANVILLE

The young author of *Along the Arno* has here written a novel which is not only a moving love story but is also a biting criticism of one aspect of Jewish society—of the stifling materialism of the rich middle classes, against which the young couple are in desperate revolt.

February — 16*s.*

The Makioka Sisters

JUNICHIRO TANIZAKI

Translated by Edward G. Seidensticker

A long, leisurely, beautifully constructed novel telling the story of a rich bourgeois family at its apogee a few years before the war, which has been compared with Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*. Tanizaki is widely regarded as Japan's greatest living novelist, and this is indubitably his masterpiece.

April — 21*s.*

The Ten Thousand Things

MARIA DERMOUT

Translated by Hans Koningsberger

Here is a novel in a thousand for all who thrill to hear tell of the wonders of the world and delight in authentic tales of far-off things, of the exotic and age-old customs fast dying out, for here they are enmeshed and dazzlingly displayed by the magic of a born story-teller. The scene is set in a spice garden in the Moluccas, where the author herself has spent the greater part of her life.

March — 16*s.*

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